

Jordan Times

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Hizbollah fires missiles on SLA positions

MARJAYOUN (AFP) — Hizbollah guerrillas launched two attacks against Israeli forces in south Lebanon Saturday, security officials said. There were no immediate reports of any casualties. Hizbollah pounded a position of the Israeli-aided South Lebanon Army at Tayr Haria near the western sector of the Jewish state's self-declared "security zone" with 15 mortar shells and three Sager missiles early Saturday afternoon, the security sources said. Earlier, rockets, automatic weapons and mortars were fired on an Israeli patrol near Ghazian, on the edge of the central sector of the occupied zone. The Islamic resistance, Hizbollah's military wing, claimed responsibility for the operations in statements issued in Beirut. Israeli artillery responded by bombarding valleys opposite the zone around the villages of Zibqin and Yater, sparking several fires, Lebanese police said, without reporting any casualties.

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Arafat says Israel ignited situation to wage war on Palestinian people

Combined agency dispatches

PALESTINIAN PRESIDENT Yasser Arafat accused Israel Saturday of trying "to wage a war" against Palestinians and warned that its crackdown following last week's suicide bombings would wreck what was left of the peace process.

"The Israeli government has ignited the situation in order to wage a war against the Palestinian people, the [Palestinian] National Authority and the leadership instead of waging that war against terrorism," Mr. Arafat said after meeting Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

He blamed Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for the tension and said the measures were unwarranted since the bombings did not come from areas under sole Palestinian control. The bombings have not been identified, and Mr. Arafat did not elaborate.

Dozens of Palestinians have been arrested since the double suicide bombing claimed by Islamist militants which took 15 lives, including the bombers, in Jerusalem's vegetable mar-

ket Wednesday.

The bombings led to a new suspension of the Israeli-Palestinian peace talks and a closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, barring tens of thousands of Palestinians from entering Israel or from travelling between autonomous towns in the West Bank.

"The aim of these measures is to torpedo the peace process and wage a war against the Palestinian people," he said. "This is the aim of the Israeli government and especially Netanyahu."

Mr. Arafat pleaded for the U.S. government to intervene.

The Palestinian president arrived in Egypt Saturday for talks with President Mubarak at his residence in Burj Al Arab, which is west of Alexandria. He left Egypt immediately after-wards.

It was Mr. Arafat's third visit to Egypt in less than two weeks.

Meanwhile, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA) offered Saturday to help Israel investigate the double suicide bombing which killed 15 people and injured more than 150 others in a Jerusalem market.



Mazen Dana (right), a Palestinian cameraman who works for Reuters Television, is prevented from filming Saturday as an Israeli soldier covers his camera's lens and another soldier rushes towards him as he tried to film a female Palestinian journalist being arrested by Israeli police (behind, center). Cameraman Dana was attacked by Israeli soldiers and lightly injured after he was punched. The Israeli police arrested Mr. Dana for interfering with their work and resisting arrest (See story on page 2) (Reuters photo)

"The Palestinian leadership is prepared to cooperate with Israeli authorities to uncover the circumstances of the terrorist operation and identify those behind it," the official news agency Wafa said. The PNA "underlines that it will not tolerate any terrorist attempts such as has

occurred in the past," it said. The decision was made at a meeting of the PNA-cabinet and the leadership headed by Mr. Arafat Friday night in the West Bank town of Ramallah.

Palestinian security forces have already conducted sweeps in the West Bank arresting dozens of people with connections to Hamas, which claimed responsibility for Wednesday's bombing, and other groups.

Israeli officials have been unable to uncover the identity of the two suicide bombers who blew themselves up Wednesday in a crowded Jerusalem marketplace, killing 13 others.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has demanded Mr. Arafat conduct a widespread crackdown on "terrorists," accusing the PNA of being lax in its pursuit of radical groups.

Israeli Chief of Staff

Amnon Shahak noted Friday that the Palestinian security officials were "cooperating" with their Israeli counterparts in the investigations.

Meanwhile, the PNA also announced it would have to introduce cutbacks due to expected economic damage by a security seal which Israel slapped on the Palestinian territories in the wake of the Jerusalem bombing.

"The Palestinian leadership decided that faced with the closure it will take immediate steps to face the situation, including cutbacks in all the authority's agencies," Wafa said, without giving details.

Israel sealed off the West Bank and Gaza Strip immediately after the bombing, preventing thousands of Palestinian workers from reaching their jobs inside Israel.

It also imposed an internal closure, hampering movement between West Bank towns.

Jordan intensifies efforts with U.S. and Israel to dilute crisis

By Tareq Ayyoub
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Jordan Saturday warned that Israel's measures against the Palestinians in the self-rule areas might lead to a negative reaction and called upon Israel to ease the five-day-old closure of the Palestinian territories.

Acting Minister of State for Information Affairs Nasser Lawzi told reporters that the Kingdom has intensified contacts with Israel and the U.S. in a bid to resume peace talks.

"Foreign Minister Fayez Tarawneh has started intensive contacts with U.S. envoy Dennis Ross and Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy," Mr. Lawzi said after the Cabinet's weekly session.

"We expect that it (U.S.) would soon announce the date of Mr. Ross' visit to the region which we believe will take place by the end of this week," Mr. Lawzi added.

He said "the visit will focus on a U.S. initiative that would help resume negotiations and search for peace especially on the Palestinian-Israeli track."

Contacts with Israel were aimed at easing what he described as exaggerated security measures by Israel in the Palestinian self-rule areas. Warning of "reactions"

from the Palestinians, Mr. Lawzi said, "the closure and tight security measures... will lead to more tension and will make them move away from the main objective, namely security."

"Jordan understands the security needs of Israel but any security measure which the Israeli government enforces, should be coordinated with the Palestinian National Authority," Mr. Lawzi emphasized.

The minister was commenting on Israel's recent steps to close the West Bank and impose tough security measures including preventing Palestinians from travelling between cities and towns in the Palestinian self-rule areas.

Israel also prevented Palestinian National Authority (PNA) ministers, who carry VIP permits, to travel and attend their cabinet sessions.

Mr. Lawzi cautioned that Palestinian reactions could bring about an uncontrollable situation.

He said: "Dr. Tarawneh's efforts centred on having Israel ease its security measures to minimise the suffering of the Palestinians and facilitate the movement of Palestinian officials in the PNA areas."

"We believe the Israeli response was, in principle,

positive. But we have to continue our efforts and hope to see concrete measures on the ground," said Mr. Lawzi.

Dr. Tarawneh called upon Israel to deal with the PNA as a peace partner and not as an "enemy or adversary."

"We understand the importance of security for Israel," Dr. Tarawneh said. "But these measures should not exceed the limits of the issues that are related to their [Israeli] security," he added.

He warned the Israeli government against "reoccupying" the Palestinian self-rule areas and called for a resumption of peace talks with the Palestinians.

Mr. Lawzi said Jordan does not object to holding an urgent meeting of the Arab League's foreign ministers council to discuss the blast that killed 15 people last Wednesday and Israeli government threats to reoccupy the Palestinian self-rule areas.

He said the Kingdom would attend such a meeting provided all parties concerned attend.

Mr. Lawzi told reporters that Palestinian President Yasser Arafat might visit Jordan soon but that no date was fixed for the visit, which was originally scheduled to take place last Wednesday.



The Palestinian Legislative Council meeting on July 30 as they begin to debate the recommendation that President Yasser Arafat sack the entire PNA-cabinet and bring several ministers to trial, notably Jamil Tarifi, on corruption charges. In a cabinet meeting in Ramallah on Friday all but two of the cabinet ministers submitted their resignations. Nabil Shaath was not present (Reuters file photo)

Egypt calls for urgent U.S. action to save peace process

CAIRO (AFP) — Egypt called on the U.S. to launch a new bid as soon as possible to save the embattled Israeli-Palestinian peace process after the Jerusalem bombings.

Foreign Minister Amr Musa said he "hoped that an American initiative will be launched as soon as possible" to salvage Mideast peacemaking, which he described as being in an "extremely delicate and serious condition."

He said the initiative must be balanced in order to lure Israel and the Palestinians back to the negotiating table after a four-month crisis in their relations. Egypt has been coordinating behind the scenes with the U.S. to try to mediate a resumption of peace talks, and Palestinian President Yasser Arafat visited Cairo for talks Saturday.

U.S. President Bill Clinton announced Friday that he would send his special Mideast envoy Dennis Ross to the region after the seven-day mourning period for the 13 Israeli victims of a double suicide bombing in a Jerusalem market Wednesday.

Mr. Ross was initially scheduled to leave for the region Wednesday to bring new ideas on breaking the deadlock, but the trip was called off after the bombing claimed by the Islamist group Hamas.

Israel also suspended a planned resumption of peace talks with the Palestinians Wednesday after the attack. The Palestinians stormed out of peace talks in March when Israel began work on a new Jewish settlement in Arab east Jerusalem.

Arafat faces first cabinet crisis after mass resignation; Abed Rabbo calls it a charade

Combined agency dispatches

Palestinian President Yasser Arafat, faced Saturday with his first ever cabinet crisis, put off deciding whether to accept the collective resignation of his ministers over corruption charges.

"There is still a long period" before a decision is made, Mr. Arafat told journalists upon his return from Cairo, where he held talks with Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak.

Sixteen of the 22 members of the PNA-cabinet submitted their resignations in a meeting with Mr. Arafat late Friday over corruption allegations.

The move — the first of its kind since the self-rule government was created in 1994 — came after the Palestinian Legislative Council (PLC) demanded Mr. Arafat replace the entire cabinet due to reports of widespread abuse of power and mismanagement.

Two of three ministers fingered directly for corruption by a council report, Civil Affairs Minister Jamil Tarifi and International Cooperation Minister Nabil Shaath, did not join the mass resignation.

Mr. Tarifi refused to sign the letter of resignation

"because he did not want it to be understood that he was resigning because of the accusations against him, which he denies," an aide to the minister told Agence France Presse (AFP).

Mr. Shaath was in Cairo at the time of the meeting with Mr. Arafat and was not on hand to sign the letter. It was unclear what his position on the move was.

Two other ministers, Information Minister Yasser Abed Rabbo and Industry Minister Bashir Barghouti, who were not charged directly in the report, also refused to resign on principle.

"If I resigned it would be understood that I am guilty of something and I am not," Mr. Barghouti told AFP in a phone call from Amman, where he was on a personal visit.

Mr. Abed Rabbo slammed the mass resignation, calling it "just a show." "This doesn't treat the real causes" of corruption, he said.

Two other ministry posts, tourism and justice, were already vacant from previous resignations that were never followed by replacements.

Transport Minister Ali Qawasmeb, like Mr. Shaath and Mr. Tarifi, was charged directly in the report and did join the resignation.

The PLC compiled the 60-page report after an internal audit estimated that corruption and poor management had cost \$326 million last year — the equivalent of 40 per cent of the Palestinian National Authority's (PNA) budget.

The full council followed up the report with a 57-1 vote Thursday demanding the removal of the cabinet and its replacement with one made up of "technocrats and experts."

Mr. Arafat has not commented on the controversy stirred up by the council report other than to issue a statement underlining he would "take the appropriate measures at the appropriate time."

But his aides have said he is open to reshuffling his government.

It was Mr. Arafat who allowed the original audit report to be published two months ago in the first public admission of the widespread abuses of power that have plagued the PNA.

The corruption issue is seen as a prime cause in the decline of Mr. Arafat's popularity among Palestinians, who have become increasingly frustrated by shows of wealth by PNA ministers and their aides.

But Mr. Abed Rabbo dismissed the mass resignation

as merely a symbolic move.

"Many of those who put forward their resignation did so only so they could remain in power," expecting Mr. Arafat to refuse, the information minister said.

"This is not serious and does not solve the real problem, which is the administrative style in the ministries. What is needed is a complete overhaul" in the ministries, he said.

PNA ministries are known to have a huge number of general managers and upper-level bureaucrats who work almost independently of the ministers.

Meanwhile, Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza Strip Saturday welcomed the offer by 16 of President Arafat's ministers to resign but some said they were uncertain whether a reshuffle would take place.

"Everything is now in the hands of President Arafat who is the only one who will take the right decision for the people," said Kamal Zewik, an engineer from the West Bank town of Hebron.

The gesture came as Mr. Arafat grapples with a peacemaking crisis with Israel after the killing of 13 people in central Jerusalem Wednesday by two Islamist suicide bombers.

Mr. Arafat indicated Sat-

urday that he would not act swiftly on the offer given the crisis, sharpened by an Israeli security clampdown.

"This is still [a] long period," he told reporters on his return to Gaza from Egypt where he discussed the peace crisis with President Hosni Mubarak.

Palestinian legislators voted 56-1 Thursday to give Mr. Arafat one month to replace his cabinet after a report from a panel of nine legislators detailing instances of alleged corruption and squandering of funds.

"It is a good gesture by the Palestinian Legislative Council and they should insist that their efforts are not going to be lost with the wind," a teacher from Gaza, Khaled Hassan, said.

"They are like thieves and changing them would be very useful but I do not believe that Mr. Arafat will replace them," said Yakub Jaarah, 60, as he played dice with friends in Ramallah.

Some cabinet ministers also doubted that Mr. Arafat would act soon.

"The president desires to postpone the issue for the time being because of the very difficult circumstances in the political process," Telecommunications Minister Imad Falouji said.

The resigned and who did not

GAZA CITY (AFP) — The following is a list of the members of the PNA cabinet who submitted their resignations Friday.

Two ministers — Freih Abu Meddein (Justice) and Elias Freij (Tourism) — resigned recently and have not yet been replaced.

Four ministers did not submit resignation letters to Mr. Arafat — Nabil Shaath (International Cooperation), Yasser Abed Rabbo (Culture and Information), Jamil Tarifi (Civil Affairs) and Bashir Barghouti (Industry).

Those who submitted their resignations were: Hassan Tahboub (Islamic Affairs) and Inisar Al Wazir (Social Affairs)

Saeb Erakat (Local Administration)
Riyad Zaanoun (Health)
Mohammad Nashashibi (Finance)
Yasser Amr (Education)
Hanan Ashrawi (Higher Education)
Samir Ghosheh (Labour)
Abdul Jawad Saleh (Agriculture)
Abdul Aziz Shahin (Supply)
Ali Qawasmeb (Transport)
Abdul Rahman Hamad (Housing)
Imad Falouji (Communications)
Azzam Al Ahmad (Public Works)
Maher Masri (Economy and Trade)
Talat Sidr (Sports)



Palestinian children play in unused car in one of the alleys in Palestinian Shati Camp in Gaza City Saturday. The Palestinian Legislative Council compiled a 60-page report estimating that poor management had cost \$326 million last year — the equivalent of 40 per cent of the PNA's budget (AFP photo)

Iranians expect trouble alongside change after Khatami takes over

TEHRAN (R) — Many Iranians expect social and economic change under incoming President Mohammad Khatami but analysts said on the eve of his takeover that he would face strong resistance from influential conservatives.

In random street interviews young Iranian men and women said Saturday they expected Mr. Khatami to tackle high inflation, unemployment and Tehran's tense ties with the West and its Gulf Arab neighbours.

"I am not into politics," said Kaveh, a medical doctor who wants to go to the U.S. for post-graduate studies.

"But my friends tell me they voted for Khatami because they want him to bring about many social changes and relax some of the restrictions on boys and girls," he told Reuters.

Mr. Khatami, 54, is a former culture minister who was forced to resign in 1992 because of what were seen by conservatives as liberal policies.

A middle-level clergyman who is regarded as an open-minded intellectual, he won by a landslide in May with the help of votes of women and the country's youth.

He will be confirmed as Iran's fifth president since the 1979 revolution by the Islamic Republic's supreme leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei Sunday and sworn in before parliament Monday.

Analysts expect him to face an uphill battle with the conservative-dominated parliament over his choice of ministers and a tough time pleasing all the factions of the broad coalition that elected him.

"I want him to keep his election promises," said Mehri, 26, who did not give her last name. "I think his cabinet will have two or three women ministers," she added.

She wants the new president to build sports facilities for women and bring about a change in marriage traditions which often oblige the bride to pay a dowry.

But a Shiite Muslim clergyman who teaches criminal law at Tehran university predicted no great social changes under Mr. Khatami.

"What freedoms and changes?" he asked. "Freedom is already here. Maybe Mr. Khatami will not succeed in making these so-called social changes because the majority of the people of Iran want conservative Islam."

Some analysts agree. "Khatami is one of them [clergymen] and they share many common ideas and issues which no one can divert from," said one analyst who asked not to be named. "His approach might be determined by the conservatives but the mainstays of the revolution cannot be changed."

The English-language daily Iran News said this week in an editorial which mainly focused on foreign policy "we have no doubt that Khatami, a follower of the late Imam [revolutionary leader Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini], would not even entertain the idea of dismantling the pillars on which Iran was built."

Tehran Times said in a news analysis "youth and women in particular have their own list of expectations." It called on Mr.

Tehran mayor says radicals are resorting to dirty tactics

TEHRAN (AP) — Tehran's mayor Saturday accused the hard-line faction that suffered a stunning defeat in presidential elections of resorting to dirty tactics to try to undermine the incoming government.

Gholam Hussein Karbaschi, who ran Mohammad Khatami's successful presidential campaign, accused hard-liners of being behind the arrest of seven senior municipal officials in recent days. He said a hard-line legislator had announced the arrests two days before they took place.

"The municipality was stormed by some armed security officials, who as far as we know didn't even have arrest warrants," Mr. Karbaschi said. "These are the doings of the faction which lost in the elections and is now trying to take revenge."

Hard-liners have been determined to block Mr. Karbaschi and other powerful moderates from getting senior positions in the new government. Mr. Khatami is expected to nominate his cabinet after his Sunday inauguration.

Moderate and hard-line factions inside Iran's Islamic government have been locked in a power struggle that came to a head in the May elections which saw Mr. Khatami soundly defeat Ali Akbar Nateq-Nouri, the hard-line parliament speaker. Mr.

Khatami campaigned for an easing of the strict Islamic laws that govern Iran.

The arrests of the municipal officials, which informed sources said took place on the orders of a hard-line judiciary official, have raised an uproar among moderates.

The state-run Iran Daily reported Saturday that 100 legislators in the 270-seat Majlis, or parliament, had signed a letter in support of Mr. Karbaschi and his running of the municipality.

Hussein Marashi, a moderate legislator, said the arrests were "an assault on [Mr. Karbaschi's] integrity," and warned of the "abuse of power by the losing faction," the paper reported.

Newspapers have said the arrested officials were charged with corruption, but Mr. Karbaschi said that no charges had been brought against them. Mr. Karbaschi also said the men were clean.

Mr. Karbaschi said Mr. Khatami had offered him posts in the new government, which he refused.

"I told him I would rather stay in the municipality and continue my work," Mr. Karbaschi said.

Mr. Karbaschi, who has a clean image, is credited with transforming Tehran from the drab, dirty city it was after the 1980-88 war with Iraq, into a clean city dotted with parks, trees and flowers.

Khatami to form a cabinet of well-educated, experienced and "open-minded" ministers to bring about "more political and social freedom."



A Palestinian on his donkey is turned back by an Israeli soldier as the man tries to cross a roadblock in Hebron Saturday. Israel continues to keep Palestinians from leaving their towns and from crossing into Israeli territory following the July 30 twin suicide bombings (See story on page 1) (Reuters photo)

Amnesty voices concern over Lebanese journalist

BEIRUT (R) — The human rights group Amnesty International has expressed concern over a Lebanese television journalist who was detained by Israeli forces in south Lebanon last month.

In a press statement late Friday, the London-based group said it was concerned about the well-being of Roger Nabra who was arrested along with his two brothers and their cousin and reportedly taken to Israel.

"Amnesty International is concerned about the well-being of the four men and fears that they may be in danger of ill-treatment, torture and prolonged detention without charge or trial," the statement said.

"Despite Amnesty International's requests for information from the Israeli government to determine their whereabouts, the location of their detention remains unknown," it added.

Mr. Nabra is a cameraman for Lebanon's MTV private television network. Gabriel Al Murr, the brother of Lebanese Interior Minister Michel Al Murr, is a major shareholder in MTV.

Israel holds a 15-kilometre wide border zone in south Lebanon. Pro-Iranian Hizbullah (Party of God) guerrillas regularly attack Israeli troops and their local militia allies in the zone.

Israeli police hold Reuters cameraman in West Bank

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (R) — Israeli police detained a Reuters television cameraman in the West Bank town of Hebron Saturday when he tried to film the arrest of a Palestinian journalist at an Israeli military checkpoint.

The cameraman, Mazen Dana, was taken away for questioning at a police post, an Israeli police spokesman said.

Film of the incident by another cameraman present showed an Israeli soldier approach Mr. Dana and attempt to prevent him from recording the arrest of the local woman journalist by two Israeli policemen.

It showed Mr. Dana surrounded and jostled by five

soldiers, one of whom used a stranglehold, following an exchange of words. Mr. Dana was driven away in a police vehicle.

An army spokesman said the incident was a police matter.

The police spokesman, Ofer Sivan, said Mr. Dana had been detained because soldiers said he had "disturbed" their work.

"He is now in investigation. When we have finished our investigation I expect he will be released," Mr. Sivan said.

Israel has imposed a security clampdown on parts of the West Bank where it still has forces in a hunt for Islamist militants following an attack on a Jerusalem market by two

suicide bombers Wednesday which killed 15 people.

Israel handed over about 80 per cent of Hebron — home to 100,000 Palestinians and 400 Jewish settlers — to the Palestinian National Authority under peace deals last January but keeps soldiers in the rest of the town to protect Jewish enclaves.

Hebron was the scene of clashes between Palestinians and Israeli troops after a right-wing Jewish woman posted posters on storefronts in the town last month depicting the Prophet Muhammad as a pig.

The violence subsided when Palestinian police intervened two weeks ago but flares up occasionally.

Accidental grenade blast kills 7 at Turk wedding

DIYARBAKIR (R) — A hand grenade worn by a reveller at a wedding party in southeast Turkey exploded accidentally and seven people were killed and 50 were wounded by the blast and the ensuing panic, a police official said Saturday.

"The explosion was caused when the pin of a hand grenade on a dancing village guard was pulled accidentally by the vest worn by another man dancing next to him," Vehbi Gokalp, police chief of the largely Kurdish Sirnak province, told Reuters.

Police detained 60 people, including the groom, on charges of negligence after the incident late Friday in the town of Cizre, near the Iraqi

border.

"Three people died immediately but the ensuing panic caused many of the casualties. Seven people were killed and 50 wounded," Mr. Gokalp said. Most of the casualties were women and children, he said.

Both the bride and groom were unhurt, police said. Witnesses said village guards, members of a government-paid Kurdish militia against the separatist Kurdish Labour Party (PKK), shot in the air to seek help from security forces after the explosion.

However, the regional governor, quoted by Anatolian news agency, said many of the injured were wounded by wild gunfire, apparently

touched off by panic after the blast.

Most of the wedding guests were heavily armed, Anatolian said.

Earlier security officials said the blast might have been the work of the PKK, which has targeted the village guards in its bloody insurgency for Kurdish self-rule.

The wounded were taken to hospitals in Cizre and the nearby administrative centre of Diyarbakir.

"The explosion occurred while some people were dancing and others watching them. The PKK might have done it because we are village guards," Idris Idim, a wounded guard taken to a hospital in Diyarbakir, told Reuters.

7 years on, Iraq still hailing Kuwaiti invasion as victory

BAGHDAD (AFP) — Iraq hailed its invasion of Kuwait as an historic victory Saturday, seven years to the day after the operation which led to the crushing defeat of the 1991 Gulf war and a crippling oil embargo.

State-run newspapers dedicated their pages to explaining how Iraqi troops swept into the tiny emirate to the south to fend off a U.S.-inspired plot aimed at destroying Iraq.

"The entry into Kuwait on August 2, 1990, is one of the greatest and most important events in the history of humanity," Al

Jumhuriyah newspaper wrote.

It said Iraq was left with only two options after failing to settle its differences with Kuwait over accusations the emirate was "stealing" its oil and encroaching on its territory.

It could "either wait for the start of operations to destroy Iraq, or to surprise regional and international plotters by presenting them with a fait accompli," Al-Jumhuriyah said.

Babel newspaper, run by President Saddam Hussein's eldest son Uday, said the Kuwaiti

invasion was a "legitimate national riposte to plots concocted by Washington and Kuwaiti leaders... who stole oil and wanted to attack Iraq."

Uday's newspaper said the U.S. was using the Kuwaiti card to this day to attack Iraq by ensuring U.N. economic sanctions imposed in 1990 stay in place.

Under the headline "the plot failed and we won," the official Al Qadisiyah newspaper also lashed out at the sanctions.

"Kuwaiti leaders continue to spearhead the plot against Iraq and the Arab World," the newspaper

said, accusing the emirate of "plundering Arab wealth by paying bribes to maintain the embargo."

Iraq took over Kuwait in a day and declared it its 19th province. A U.S.-led coalition drove Iraqi troops out of the oil-rich emirate seven months later in the 1991 Gulf war.

Sanctions imposed shortly after the invasion can only be lifted once Iraq has complied with U.N. resolutions, chiefly the dismantling of its capacity to build weapons of mass destruction and the destruction of existing stockpiles.

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 73111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

14:10Cartoons
15:00Energy Express
16:00American Chart Show
18:00French Programmes
19:00News in French
19:30News Headline
19:35Fresh Prince of Belair
20:00Cinema, Cinema, Cinema
20:30National Geographic
21:10Renegade
22:00News in English
22:30One West Walkie
23:15Sisters

PRAYER TIMES

04:19Fajr
05:47Sunrise Duha
12:42Dhuhr
16:22Asr
19:37Maghreb
21:04Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church
Swiffish, Tel. 810740
Assemblies of God Church Tel.
632785.
St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590
Church of the Annunciation
Tel. 637440.
De la Salle Church Tel. 661757.
Terra Sancta Church Tel. 623666
Anglican Church Tel. 652826.
Armenian Catholic Church Tel.

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Moderate summer weather conditions will prevail with clouds appearing at low altitudes and winds northwesterly moderate to active. In Aqaba, it will be hot, winds northerly moderate to active and seas calm.

Min/Max. temp.
Amman17/30
Aqaba27/38

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY
Yesterday's high temperatures:
Amman 29, Aqaba 37 Humidity
readings: Amman 44 per cent,
Aqaba 29 per cent.

AMMAN:
Dr. Ghaleb Zawaideh736011
Dr. Tawfiq Qub'ain632029
Dr. Hisham Kan'an790286
Dr. Khalidoun Asfour699440
Firas pharmacy661912
Fendous pharmacy778336
Al Aserna pharmacy637055
Nairoukh pharmacy623672
Al Sulam pharmacy636730
Yacoub pharmacy644945
Shmeisani pharmacy637660
Najib pharmacy847632

IRBID:

Dr. Mazen Abu Bakir276852
Al Quds pharmacy(—)
ZARQA:
Dr. Akram Haddad985550
Khalil pharmacy985417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre637111
Civil Defence Department661111
Civil Defence Immediate Rescue630341
Civil Defence Emergency199
Desert Police192 62111, 63777
Fire Brigade617101
Blood Bank775121
Highway Police843402
Traffic Police896390
Public Security Dept.630321
Hotel Complaints605800
Price Complaints661176
Water & Sewage Complaints897467
Amman Municipality Complaints787111
Telephone Information (directory assistance)121
Overseas Calls010230
Central Amman Telephone Repairs623101
Abdali Tel. Repairs661101
Jordan Television773111
Radio Jordan774111
Water Authority680100
J. Electricity Authority815615
Electric Power Co.636381
RJ Flight Information08-53200
Queen Alia Int. Airport 08-53200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:
Hussein Medical Centre81381/362
Khalidi Maternity644281/6
Alkileh Maternity642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity642362
Malhas, J. Amman636140
Palestine, Shmeisani607071
Shmeisani Hospital669131
University Hospital845845
Al-Muasher Hospital6672279
The Islamic, Abdali666126/37
Al-Ahli, Abdali666126/46
Al-Ahli, Abdali777101/26
Italian, Al-Muhajreen777101/3
Al-Bashir775111/26
Army, Marka891611/15
Queen Alia Hospital602240/50
Amal Hospital674155
The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital09/883323
Zarqa National09/900560
Ibn Sina Hospital09/986732
Al Hikma Modern Hospital09/990994

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital021275555
Greek Catholic Hospital02127275
Ibn Al Nafees Hospital021247100

AQABA:

Princess Haya Hospital031314111
FOR THE TRAVELLER
QUEEN ALIA

INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

This information is supplied by Royal Jordanian (RJ) information department at the Queen Alia International Airport Tel. (08)53200-5, where it should always be verified. Information on other flights can be supplied on phone 08 (52700)

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
09:30Jeddah (RJ)
10:05Bombay (RJ)
10:05Dhahran, Riyadh (RJ)
10:15Lamaca (RJ)
10:25Beirut (RJ)
10:45Doha, Bahrain (RJ)
11:10Dubai, Abu Dhabi (RJ)
17:40New York, Amsterdam (RJ)
17:50Amsterdam, Brussels (RJ)
18:05Paris (RJ)
18:50London (RJ)
19:05Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
19:10Madrid, Geneva (RJ)
19:10Athens (RJ)
20:10Chicago, Detroit, Amsterdam (RJ)
20:40Vienna (RJ)
20:50Rome (RJ)
21:30Frankfurt (RJ)
00:45Beirut (add) (RJ)
01:05Cairo (RJ)

Other Flights

12:00Sanaa (Y)
12:00Jeddah (SV)
13:35Bahrain (GF)
14:30Al Arish (PF)
15:20Moscow (SU)
21:10Beirut (ME)
21:35Cairo (MS)
23:20Istanbul (TK)
00:59Cairo (MS)
02:15London (BA)
07:20London (BA)
07:20Tel Aviv (LY)

DEPARTURES

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights
06:00Madrid (RJ)
06:45Beirut (RJ)
07:00Lamaca (RJ)
11:50Frankfurt (RJ)
12:10Tunis, Casablanca (RJ)
12:15Ankara, Istanbul (RJ)
12:15Vienna (RJ)
12:40Amsterdam, New York (RJ)
12:45Rome (RJ)

Other Flights

13:20Athens (RJ)
13:25London (RJ)
21:00New Delhi (RJ)
21:10Cairo (RJ)
21:20Beirut (add) (RJ)
21:25Jeddah (RJ)
21:40Damascus (RJ)
22:25Singapore, Jakarta (RJ)
22:40Bangkok (RJ)
23:15Abu Dhabi, Dubai (RJ)
23:45Sanaa (RJ)

Other Flights

07:00Beirut (ME)
07:55London (BA)
13:00Sanaa (Y)
13:30Jeddah (SV)
14:25Doha (GF)
15:30Al Arish (PF)
16:35Moscow (SU)
22:25Cairo (MS)
00:45Amsterdam (KL)
02:00Cairo (ME)
07:00Beirut (ME)
07:55London (BA)
08:15Tel Aviv (LY)

Royal Wings (RW)

07:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
09:15Aqaba (RW)
10:30Amman (QAIA) (RW)
17:45 Amman (Marka Airport) (RW)
18:55Tel Aviv (RW)
21:30Amman (QAIA) (RW)
22:50Aqaba (RW)

Amal Car

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Senate Speaker Zeid Rifai Saturday receives Sudanese Ambassador to Jordan Omar Abdul Majed. Mr. Rifai also received Tunisian Ambassador to Jordan Izzeddine Qarqani on the occasion of the end of his tour of duty as well as the Kuwaiti Charge D'affaires in Amman Faisal Saleiman. (Petra photo)

Cabinet circulates ministry, department directives

AMMAN (Petra) — The Cabinet has circulated instructions to various government departments and ministries, setting guidelines for the preparation of 1998 fiscal budgets.

These budgets should be prepared at least one month before the beginning of the coming fiscal year, the Cabinet decided.

According to the instructions, the budgets should be based on the following principles:

- stemming public expenditure, addressing an overstaffed and ineffective public administration, and enforcing organizational and control systems;
- the most efficient utilization of the state's financial resources at a time in which the country pursues the implementation of the Economic

Restructuring Programme.

- the reduction of reliance on foreign aid;
- focusing on implementing income-generating projects, aimed at combating poverty, as delineated by the government-sponsored social security package;
- contributing towards the government-sponsored decentralisation policy;
- preparing department budgets on scientific bases;
- reducing the government's role in production and allocating a leading role to the private sector for same.

In order to reduce public administration spending, the government has requested that:

- all government depart-

ments and independent organisations try to increase revenues, adopt sound processes for tax collection as well as that of dues to the Treasury.

- various public organisations work towards reducing their financial reliance on the state;
- government departments refrain from creating new job vacancies as well as cancel existing vacant posts;
- official departments reduce operational costs, cease renting new offices, and reduce allocations for overtime work, transport and employee bonuses;
- government departments reexamine their contributions to regional and international organisations in consideration of national benefits, expected from these organisations.

- government departments restrict capital spending to projects already initiated and allocate capital only for projects deemed urgent;
- public departments restrict allocations for government appropriation of land or real estate as well as for agricultural roads, health centres, schools, and social service offices in underprivileged areas;
- official departments refrain from allocating capital for the purchase of new cars, furniture and equipment and, rather, concentrate on maintenance;
- public departments refrain from purchasing computers unless in consultation with the National Information Centre.

Al-Amal Cancer Centre concludes Breast Cancer Awareness Week

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Promoting cancer awareness in the Kingdom and the importance of early detection, Al Amal Cancer Centre (ACC) last week concluded its Breast Cancer Awareness Week.

Breast cancer was chosen as the theme as it is the most common type of cancer in women and is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in women, exceeded only by lung cancer, according to a study by the American Cancer Society (ACS).

Chances of developing breast cancer increase with age — approximately 77 per cent of women over the age of 50 are diagnosed with breast cancer each year, according to the study, while women between the ages of 20-29 account for 0.3 per cent of the total number of patients.

The decision to focus on the disease was taken after the centre noted that women tended to visit the Female Clinic when their disease was already in advanced stages, which, according to ACC Director of Public and International Relations Dina Ra'ad, could be avoided if women appreciated the importance of early detection.

Al Amal Centre Female Clinic has specialised female nurses and doctors to provide early detection services, from clinical examinations and mammograms to consultations and teaching women how to perform breast examinations, Ms. Ra'ad stated.

The week kicked off with an Arabic radio talk show, with guests such as Assistant Professor at the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) School of Medicine and ACC Surgical Oncology Consultant Mohammed Khammash as well as Director of the Institute of Diplomacy Maha Kalaji, who is also a cancer survivor.

Most calls and visits to the centre were actually made by men on behalf of their wives, daughters or sisters, Ms. Ra'ad explained.

The importance of addressing the issue socially and encouraging women to speak unashamedly was often mentioned by those who called, she added.

Most people were concerned with the high cost of treatment, according to Ms. Ra'ad.

Al Amal Cancer Centre, a non-governmental, non-profit organisation, is attempting to solve the cost issue, through encouraging one million Jordanians to participate in the advanced Health Care Programme at the cost of ten dinars a year, Ms. Ra'ad asserted.

This could provide enough of a monetary reserve to help pay for cancer treatment, she explained.

The seminar's daily lectures began by greeting women with single wrapped flowers and information packets with fact sheets detailing the importance and methods of early detection of female cancer among other materials.

Participants hailed from urban and rural backgrounds as well as from all age groups.

Many told the Jordan Times that they were hesitant to come as they feared the disease and were uncomfortable even pronouncing the word "cancer."

From a psychological standpoint, Ms. Kalaji stressed that the important message was to encourage cancer patients not to despair, and that strong will and optimism play a major role in achieving a cure.

For relatives of cancer patients, Ms. Kalaji advised that those diagnosed with the disease be allotted support, but not pity.

Lectures were also given in Irbid, with around 200 women participating, some hailing from Jerash.

Some women requested a comprehensive cancer service in Irbid, as they found travel to Amman prohibitive.

The ACC is providing a mobile mammography unit in the north and south of Jordan, the first will soon open in the Jordan University of Science and Technology (JUST) in

Irbid, Ms. Ra'ad affirmed.

The lectures will hopefully be held annually, Ms. Ra'ad said, adding "we do hope to hold conferences in more cities, and include lectures about other types of cancer such as colon and male-related cancers, which the ACC will organise on a regular basis in the future."

Health care has always been a priority among the public services, yet limited resources, a rapid growing population, and the rising cost of health care prevent the government from securing all necessary medical services for the public.

The General Union of Voluntary Societies (GUVS), the overall umbrella of voluntary organisations in Jordan consequently formed the National Task Force for the Establishment of Al Amal Cancer Centre.

The project received official consent and was documented as one of the national projects in Jordan's 1986-1990 Economic and Social Development Five Year Plan.

The ACC goal is to provide comprehensive cancer care and services to the people of Jordan and the region.

These services include early detection, treatment (surgery, chemotherapy and radiotherapy) and rehabilitation of cancer patients as well as creating public awareness and education about the disease and promoting cancer prevention and control.

The centre aims at contributing to the scientific community at large by conducting and participating in applied research projects and cooperating with advanced cancer centres worldwide.

The ACC's main facilities and equipment include:

- an inpatient hospital with 120 beds in addition to an intensive care unit and recovery ward;
- a bone marrow transplantation unit;
- adult and paediatric outpatient clinics;
- A radio diagnostic and early detection department including CAT scans, magnet-

ic resonance imaging (MRI), fluoroscopy, mammography and ultrasound;

- a radio-therapy department, including two linear accelerators, a radiotherapy planning system, a simulator and a brachiotherapy device and moulding room;
- a nuclear medicine department with a gamma camera and a hot laboratory;
- a physical and psychological social rehabilitation department;
- a woman's centre for screening, early detection and cancer awareness and education;
- "stop smoking" and "healthy diet" clinics;
- a paediatric section including inpatient, outpatient and recreational facilities;
- central laboratories, for microbiology, biochemistry, haematology, histopathology and immunology;
- a blood bank;
- educational and counselling facilities, including a lecture hall and psychological and social educational centres.

Al Amal Centre is a national project and has heretofore collected JD 11 million in donations, other funding comes from GUVS, loans from the Islamic Development Bank in Jeddah, and a grant from the government of the Netherlands.

The centre's running costs are covered through private and public grants and donations, in addition to membership fees for the health care programme.

For an annual sum of JD 14, the programme's members are covered for treatment costs of up to JD 10,000.

The centre hopes to provide treatment to those who cannot afford it, and many contributors have specifically asked that their donations be directed to a like fund and, therefore, an "aid fund" was established with an individual bank account.

Al Amal Centre cooperates with similar organisations worldwide.

35% of foreign workers have adjusted to new labour regulations — Khasawneh

AMMAN (J.T.) — Out of an estimated 500,000 foreigners employed in Jordan, only 35 per cent have heretofore adjusted to the Kingdom's labour regulations this year, according to Minister of Labour Saleh Khasawneh.

The minister was quoted by the local press Saturday as appealing to employers to give priority to Jordanians in hiring workers.

Those employers who require foreign labour should consult with the Ministry of Labour's employment offices to ensure that guest workers hold valid permits entitling them to work in the Kingdom, he added.

The ministry will take very stringent measures to organise the local labour market, Dr. Khasawneh maintained.

It will not extend a work permit mandate beyond the Aug. 9 deadline set by the ministry and approved by the Cabinet, he asserted.

The local labour market is saturated with guest workers and any new permits will be offered only to workers whose skill is urgently needed, and for which Jordanian replace-

ments do not exist, the minister admonished.

The government would like to avoid having to order foreigners to leave the country and is continually seeking help from the Egyptian embassy in Amman to urge Egyptian nationals to abide by the Kingdom's labour regulations, Dr. Khasawneh stated.

However, the Ministry of Labour may well seek the help of the Ministry of Interior to expel workers who do not hold valid work permits if forced to do so, he added.

Subsequent to the extension given to Egyptian workers, the ministry will have no alternative but to impose the fines on those who violate the law and order them to leave the country, the minister said.

Egyptian workers were given a three-month extension, beginning in March, to conform to new ministry regulations.

This was subsequently extended an additional three weeks and then one month, ending Aug. 9.

Irish institute admits 15 Jordanian fellows

By Nadia Mukhlis
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland (RCSI) admitted 15 new Jordanian fellows last week, after a post-graduate ceremony held in conjunction with the University of Jordan.

The ceremony, which took place at the University of Jordan, was attended by President of the University of Jordan Fawzi Gharaibeh, RCSI Vice President Barry O'Donnell, Director of Human Resources in the Educational Department Kandil Shaker, Dean of the Faculty of Medicine and Head of Medical Departments at the University of Jordan Mahmoud Abu Khalaf.

The RCSI has been holding examinations in Jordan since 1989, Dr. O'Donnell stated.

He told the Jordan Times that he was impressed with medical developments in the Kingdom over the past few years and praised Jordan's medical centres and equipment therein.

"We began with the intention of assisting the university in providing postgraduate examinations for doctors in Jordan and the surrounding region," Dr. O'Donnell explained.

Successful doctors are given the opportunity to receive higher training to provide the highest level of health care for their country's citizens, he added.



The 15 Jordanian fellows pictured above have been admitted to the Royal College of Surgeons in Ireland

added.

The number of examiners has increased by almost 100 per cent, due to the dedicated work of both Dr. Abu Khalaf and Director of the Centre for Postgraduate Education Dr. Kandil Shaker, according to Dr. O'Donnell.

The RCSI is a private institution which receives no state funding.

It was founded over 210 years ago and has provided surgical education and training to doctors worldwide.

Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Bahrain have become important over-

seas centres for the college, Dr. O'Donnell stated.

"We hope that we can continue to work closely in the future," he added.

"The doctors, nurses and patients all helped to successfully hold examinations and they are a credit to the University of Jordan," Dr. O'Donnell maintained.

This year, 98 subscribers were tested of whom 15 obtained the fellowship in surgery from the RCSI, from Jordan, Iraq, Egypt and South Africa.

The examiners hailed from Ireland, Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Jordan.

The four Royal Colleges of the United Kingdom have recently formulated new plans which will provide more structured training for surgeons in the next century, according to Dr. O'Donnell.

The college has also recently set up a committee to judge the effect this training will have on overseas activities, he stated.

One of the committee's responsibilities will be to formulate a policy which allows continuous development in the relationships and activities of overseas partners, he concluded.

Conference covers textile exports from Islamic countries

AMMAN (Petra) — Jordan Saturday urged Islamic countries to exchange expertise and launch joint ventures in the ready-made clothing and textile industries.

The Kingdom also suggested increased efforts to find new markets for their products in Europe.

Addressing the opening session of a four-day international seminar, attended by nine Islamic nations, World Trade Organisation (WTO) representatives, and the U.N. Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD),

Secretary General of the Ministry of Industry and Trade Mohammad Halaqah asserted that ending the deficit in the trade balance between Islamic countries and Europe can only be achieved through the adoption of appropriate strategies for promoting exports to consumer markets there.

He described Jordan's clothing and textile sector as having increased its exports to \$71 million last year up from \$35 million in 1992.

The meeting is directed towards a common strategy to sell ready-made

clothing and textiles to European markets.

According to Mohammad Iffat, from the Islamic Development Bank, the meeting will debate the WTO's expected impact on Islamic countries' textile exports, exchange of expertise among the participating countries and opportunities for Islamic countries to achieve integration in the textiles industry.

During the first session, two working papers from Jordan and Lebanon were reviewed.

Tourist guides undergo training course in Petra

PETRA (Petra) — Jordanian tourist guides lack sufficient information about the Kingdom and archaeological sites therein, prompting the Ministry of Tourism and the University of Jordan's Studies and Research Centre (UJSRC) to embark on a first stage of qualifying and rehabilitating guides to offer better service, according to UJSRC Director Habis Samawi.

Addressing a five-day training course for tourist guides, convened in Petra, Dr. Samawi described the course as designed to streamline information about tourist and archaeological sites in Jordan, help guides offer better service, and cope with new archaeological finds and information covering the historical background of the Kingdom.

Director of the Petra Region Council Dr. Kamel Mahadin told participants that the tourist guides play a major role in marketing archaeological and other sites and, therefore, must be equipped with in-depth knowledge about the country's history, culture and modern life.

Dr. Mahadin, deputising for Minister of Tourism and Antiquities Akel Biltaji, stated that tourist guides act as ambassadors for their country and reflect its true image.

Guides must highlight the historical and cultural importance of the ancient site of Petra, he added.

Dr. Mahadin announced that the government, acting in conjunction with Jordanian universities and donor nations, seeks to recruit distinguished tourist guides to join workshops convened for guides within the Mediterranean countries expected to commence next year.

The 50 participants are expected to examine architecture in Petra, the water distribution system adopted by the Nabateans, Nabatean transport and trade systems, the Nabatean way of life and art, as well as other general topics of concern.

Majali leaves for UAE

ABU DHABI (Petra) — Prime Minister Abdul Salam Majali on Saturday started a visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) during which he will hold talks with senior UAE officials on bilateral relations and means of bolstering them in all fields as well as issues of common concern.

WHAT'S GOING ON JERASH FESTIVAL

* Concert by Spanish Dos Hermanas Band at the South Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

* Concert by the European Union Baroque Orchestra at the North Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

* Concert by the Irbid Arab Music Band at Artemis Steps at 8:30 p.m.

* Concert by band of the Jordan University of Science and Technology at the Sound and Light Theatre at 8:30 p.m.

* Play entitled "Salamistan" at Gracia Theatre at 8:00 p.m. (to be followed by oud performance by Ghassan Abbasi at 9:30 p.m.)

* Musical performance by Jordanian and Palestinian bands, as well as a circus at the main square at 7:00 p.m.

* Display of handicrafts and sculptures at Zeus Vault.

Rescuers free survivor from site of Australian landslide

THREDBO (AFP) — Cheers echoed across a desolate mountain rescue site here Saturday as rescuers freed a man trapped for more than 64 hours in the rubble of a killer landslide.

In the Dim Dusk, local ski instructor and summer guide, Stuart Diver was lifted from a hole on a stretcher wrapped in blue blankets.

A rescue spokesman said Mr. Diver, in his mid-30s, had suffered only relatively minor injuries, lacerations and mild hypothermia.

"There appears to be no other injuries at this stage that we can detect," the spokesman said.

"Obviously being young and fit gave the body much more of a reserve and certainly that would have helped. A lesser fit person would most likely have died," said Mark Gillett, a specialist in emergency medicine.

Loud cheers echoed across the rescue site as diver was carried to an ambulance with medics and rescuers crowding round him.

He was located before dawn after being entombed alone between layers of concrete since the landslide struck shortly before midnight Wednesday, but it was dusk before he was brought to the surface.

Police said that six people were confirmed dead in the landslide in this snowy mountain resort with another 13 still missing.

Mr. Diver had been lying on his back on concrete in a tiny cavity with a stream of water running down beside him, said police spokesman, Charlie Sanderson, but had been conscious all day. On Wednesday night, Mr.

Diver and his wife Sally had gone to bed in a room at the Bimbadeen staff lodge.

"The whole bedroom has been devastated," said Mr. Sanderson and his wife's location was not known.

A laconic phrase before dawn — "yeah, I can hear you" — alerted the 400-strong rescue force they had found a survivor.

Describing how he had heard a murmur just before dawn, firefighter Steve Hurst said that all rescue machinery was turned off.

"I lay down on my stomach and made contact. I yelled out, 'rescue team working overhead, can anyone hear me?' There was a murmur. I repeated the call and had a voice come strongly back to me. The gentleman identified himself, said he was in fine spirits and extremely cold, said

Mr. Hurst.

About seven hours later rescuers were holding hands with the ski instructor through a 10-centimetre hole and pumping hot air into the cavity.

"It's just a miracle. Everyone has seen the tragedy of the slide. To find someone still alive under all that rubble is just fantastic," said an ambulance spokesman, Dane Goodwin.

"It's amazing that he's not more seriously injured," Mr. Goodwin said.

More than 400 workers and a convoy of heavy machinery were at work on the disaster site which looks over the ski slopes.

They faced the frightening prospect of further land slippages — a factor that has forced them to work at an agonisingly slow pace since the disaster.



Rescue workers pull Stuart Diver from deep beneath the rubble of a landslide Saturday that destroyed two ski lodges at an Australian resort on July 30. Diver was trapped for nearly 64 hours in a pocket of air, sandwiched between huge concrete slabs (Reuters photo)

Muslim refugees in Sarajevo besiege visiting Bosnian Serbs

SARAJEVO (AFP) — Bosnian Serb refugees returning to visit their former homes in Sarajevo on Friday night were besieged in a town hall by Muslim refugees, police said Saturday.

A group of 13 Serbs had returned to their former suburb of Vogosca for talks with the authorities of the Croat-Muslim Federation about resettling in their homes, the police said.

But a crowd of angry Muslim refugees, who had fled the former Muslim eastern enclaves of Srebrenica and Zepa during the Bosnian war and now live in the area, saw the Serbs in the town hall and blockaded the building in late afternoon.

"About 200 Muslim refugees came. They stood in front of the building and

started protesting. The police sealed off the building with a cordon, we did not let anyone enter," said a spokesman for Sarajevo Canton police, Adnan Kosovac.

He said police then brought cars to the building, and the refugees, with a police escort, were conveyed out of the suburb at 10:00 p.m. with no casualties.

Television pictures showed Bosnian police and NATO armoured vehicles outside the town hall building, watching the crowd of Muslim refugees. A Bosnian TV crew said refugees blocked at least one road and stoned the TV crew when they came to film.

"We established a presence and monitored the situation," said Major John

Blakeley, spokesman for the NATO-led Stabilisation Force (SFOR).

The incident augured badly for the prospects of returning Bosnia's ethnic minority refugees to their former homes.

Attempts earlier this year by the United Nations to move small groups of refugees of one ethnic group into former homes in areas controlled by another have mostly ended in failure.

Muslims returning to former homes in the northern Serb-held village of Gajevi and to the southern Croat-held town of Stolac have been attacked and their houses burned.

Serbs have also been attacked when they tried to resettle in former homes in the eastern Croat-held town of Drvar.

4 death row inmates executed in Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — A murderer who killed four people when he was 19 but went on to write a best-seller behind bars has been executed with three other prisoners in Japan, human rights groups said Saturday.

Norio Nagayama, 48, wrote "Mushi No Namida" (Tears Of Ignorance), which was published in 1971 and became a best-seller. "Ignorance gave a birth to the (murder) incident. I hate poverty which produces ignorance," he wrote in the book.

Nagayama, who was snubbed by Japanese writers' groups but accepted by a writers' society in the German province of Saar, was still a minor under Japanese law at the time of the murders.

"He was a poor man who made a mistake in poverty and harsh surroundings," said Ryuzo Saki, a novelist who published a book called Death Row Inmate Norio Nagayama in 1991.

"Otherwise, he could have led a decent life as he was originally intelligent."

Human rights groups charged the government had deliberately chosen Nagayama to be among the four hanged Friday because they wanted to show offences by young criminals will receive serious punishment.

The execution could have come at "any time, seven years have passed since he got the final death sentence," Mr. Saki told AFP.

Calls for stiffer penalties against young criminals have grown since police arrested a teenager in June on suspicion of murdering and beheading an 11-year-old boy in the western Japanese city of Kobe.

The suspect in Kobe, who turned 15 under police detention, could go home on probation or into detention in a reformatory for up to three years under the juvenile law, which bans criminal prosecution of people under the age of 16.

"They (authorities) probably thought they would be able to avoid facing criticism by conducting executions at this time," said Yoshihiro Yasuda, a lawyer and member of Forum 90, an anti-execution alliance of civil groups.

The latest round of executions is the third since Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto took office in January last year and the first since December when three inmates were hanged in Tokyo.

It brought to 25 the number of death row inmates executed since March 1993 when Japan ended a 40-month moratorium on the death penalty and began executing limited numbers of condemned prisoners.

Fifty inmates are still on death row in Japan, according to Amnesty International.

Democratic Party may join ANC, NP renegades

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — The Liberal Democratic Party (DP) may ally itself with two popular, controversial ex-members of the ruling African National Congress (ANC) and reform the party to become a primarily-black movement were rebuffed.

Mr. Meyer was at one time widely regarded a potential successor to Mr. De Klerk, and is highly respected for the role he played in negotiating the NP's handover of power to a democratically-elected government.

Together with Mr. Holomisa — who was ejected from the ANC last year by President Nelson Mandela — Mr. Meyer is expected to announce the formation of a new opposition party on September 27.

Mr. Holomisa, once a popular military leader of the apartheid-designated

tribal homeland of Transkei, was fired from his post as deputy environment minister after accusing several party officials — including Deputy President Thabo Mbeki — of corruption.

Since then, Mr. Holomisa has drawn large crowds at several independent political rallies around the country.

The 43-year old politician has enjoyed widespread support amongst South Africa's poor black youth as well as ex-fighters in the ANC's apartheid-era guerrilla movement. Umkhonto We Sizwe (MK).

He is also respected by anti-apartheid activists for his vocal opposition to the apartheid regime, during an era when his hold on the semi-independent Transkei depended at least partly on monetary support from the

white-minority government. Another ex-homeland leader, former Bophuthatane President Lucas Mangope, is also considering joining the new party to be formed by Mr. Meyer and Mr. Holomisa, the Saturday Star said.

Mr. Mangope has been accused of overseeing widespread corruption by his administration, and was deposed for opposing South Africa's democratic transition process, which culminated in the historic April 1994 all-race elections.

The DP, a vocal opposition force in parliament, won less than 2 per cent of the vote in the 1994 poll, compared to 20 per cent by the NP and 62 per cent by the ruling ANC.

Suharto gets Mandela letter to free Timorese rebel

JAKARTA (AFP) — Indonesia's President Suharto has finally received an overdue letter from South African President Nelson Mandela calling for the release of jailed East Timorese rebel leader, Xanana Gusmao, reports said Saturday.

"President Suharto will take the content of the letter into consideration before making a final decision," State Secretary Mardiono was quoted as saying by the Jakarta Post daily.

Mr. Mardiono said the president received the letter Friday afternoon but could not explain why it was delivered late by the Indonesian embassy in Pretoria.

"I've asked our ambassador to find out why the letter arrived so late," he added. Mr. Mandela said in Pretoria Wednesday that he had recommended Mr. Gusmao's release in a letter to Mr. Suharto earlier this month in which he asked to meet the jailed leader.

The South African president met with Mr. Gusmao at the state guest house here on July 15 with Mr. Suharto's consent.

Mr. Mardiono has denied that Mr. Gusmao's release during the 110 minute meeting, which was kept secret from the public for a

week. In the letter, Mr. Mandela said the release of all political leaders, including Mr. Gusmao, was necessary to "normalise the situation in East Timor."

Jakarta has said that Mr. Gusmao was not a political prisoner but was jailed for criminal acts. He was jailed for life in May 1993 for plotting against the state and for illegal possession of firearms. Mr. Suharto later commuted the sentence to a 20-year jail term, which Mr. Gusmao is currently serving in Jakarta.

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N. Korea says drought worsening

SEOUL (AFP) — Drought damage to food crops is worsening in North Korea, where officials have already admitted famine deaths, the North Korea Central News Agency (KCNA) said in a dispatch monitored here Saturday.

"Dry field crops in Kangwon, Jagang, South and North Hamgyong provinces and other intermediary and mountainous areas have withered. Roots of rice plants have also begun to rot," KCNA said in the report dated Friday.

The agency said there had been no rain for 60 days and that 470,000 hectares of fields had been affected by the drought as of July 30.

July is usually a wet month in North Korea with more than 200 millimetres of rain, and July and September rains usually account for 50 per cent of annual rainfall.

The

Congressional pages blot their copybooks with booze party

By Solenn De Royer
Agence France Presse

WASHINGTON — By day they are models of decorum, swiftly delivering messages and packages to U.S. lawmakers in Capitol Hill. By night — at least one night last weekend — they let down their hair at a drinking party.

The 66 teenage pages in the House of Congress were reduced to 42 after police broke up the drinking party, which is against house rules, in an empty lot in the nation's capital.

Twenty-four were sent home to face irate parents and the humiliation of having their stint at the heart of the U.S. legislative branch end in disgrace.

Each year, thousands of politically minded young Americans vie to become part of a tradition that began in the 1820s when Massachusetts Senator David Webster recruited a nine-year-old boy to refill snuffboxes, replace candles, and carry messages.

"To be a page is a chance to see government without glamour — to learn that ideals alone don't make programmes; that dreams do not automatically become reality," former President Lyndon Johnson wrote in "senate pages."

Pages, who are 16 to 18 years old, leave behind homes, families and schools to spend a year on Capitol Hill. In their uniform of navy blue blazer, white shirt and grey trousers or skirt, they begin their workday at 5 a.m. with special supplementary courses before starting eight-hour shifts in the Senate or House chambers at 9 or 10 a.m.

The pages, who are paid \$13,104 a year, used to be exclusively white and male. The first black page appeared in 1963 and the first female in 1979.

These young people spend a lot of time together, in the long days on the Hill and in the Congressional lodgings they share at night.

"Pages work as a team and not in individual members' offices," noted Sergeant-At-Arms Loretta Symms.

Despite the long hours and meager salary, many ex-pages remember their year on the hill as the time of their lives.

"I was really excited and impressed," said Jonathan Hale, 26, now a congressional aide.

"(Congress) was something that you just saw on TV, in the newspapers and magazines when you come from a small town in Maine," he said. "To be there, in Washington, it's just unbelievable."

Like many pages who return to Capitol Hill as professionals, Mr. Hale was transformed by his experience. He says he learned that "you don't have to be necessarily like the more powerful and richest person in the U.S. to make a difference. You can get involved and work hard and make a difference."

Last weekend's drinking party is not the first scandal to hurt the pages' image. In the 1980s, a democratic representative from Massachusetts had sexual relations with a 17-year-old page, which sparked a series of rules to safeguard the teenage helpers.



Cambodia's second Prime Minister Hun Sen speaks with journalists after a meeting with a mediation team from ASEAN in Phnom Penh Saturday. Cambodia called on the Association of South East Asian Nations to help prevent a new war in Cambodia (Reuters photo)

Prince's return would complicate Cambodian situation — Hun Sen

PHNOM PENH (AFP) — Cambodia's powerful second premier said Saturday after a meeting with southeast Asian foreign ministers that a return here by the ousted first premier would further "complicate" the country's political crisis.

Second Prime Minister Hun Sen, who toppled First Prime Minister Norodom Ranariddh earlier this month, told reporters: "I did not talk about the return of Prince Ranariddh but (Indonesian Foreign Minister) Ali Alatas said that the return of Prince Ranariddh would complicate even more the situation here."

Mr. Alatas and his ASEAN counterparts, Philippine Foreign Secretary Domingo Siason and Thai Foreign Minister Prachub Chaiyasarn, had flown to the Cambodian capital earlier Saturday to seek a mediating role in the crisis.

Hun Sen said he was "satisfied" with the talks and that he had accepted three points put to him by the ASEAN team.

ASEAN had called for an end to fighting between Hun Sen's Cambodian People's Party troops and the royalist FUNCINPEC, a return of exiled FUNCINPEC members and supporters of other political parties and a pledge that elections scheduled for May next year would go ahead.

Meanwhile, during a speech at a graduation ceremony at the Teacher's Training College Saturday, Mr. Hun Sen reiterated that

exiled opposition leaders could only return home if they vowed to end armed resistance to the government and stopped "supporting" Khmer Rouge rebels.

He also lashed out at the United Nations Centre of Human Rights here, saying it had "incited" officials and politicians loyal to ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh to flee the country.

Mr. Hun Sen laid down the terms under which politicians, who had fled the country after his violent takeover in Phnom Penh earlier this month, could return. "If you want to participate in the 1998 elections there are two conditions."

The first is that you cut any relations, political or military, with the Khmer Rouge," he said. "The second is that you end the armed struggle (against the government)."

Scores of officials and MPs loyal to Prince Ranariddh fled the country, apparently fearing for their lives following the prince's ouster after a weekend of bloody fighting on July 5-6.

Mr. Hun Sen said Saturday he would give the International Committee of the Red Cross access to all Cambodian prisons to check whether there had been human rights violations.

He also promised to crack down on the kidnapping scourge, vowing to arrest kidnappers, even if they were military generals or supporters of his own

Cambodian People's Party. There have been reports of mass arrests of royalist supporters and troops across Cambodia since the July 5-6 fighting.

Meanwhile, more than 5,000 Cambodian refugees and nearly 400 royalist soldiers have fled to Thailand ahead of fighting between forces of Cambodia's rival premiers, the Thai military said Saturday.

The 374 soldiers were disarmed and allowed across the border late Friday after troops loyal to Cambodian Second Prime Minister Hun Sen surprised them with a night attack using heavy weaponry, Thai army sources said.

Troops loyal to ousted First Prime Minister Prince Norodom Ranariddh appeared to be on the run in the area, but an officer from the Cambodian 12th army division of General Lay Virak said the fighting would go on.

"Royalist forces will not lose. We will continue to fight in every military style (as guerrillas)," said Colonel Saow Tik, one of the Cambodian soldiers held in a Thai camp separate from the civilians.

Another 100 Cambodians had come across Saturday at a border checkpoint some 20 kilometres north of here to join some 1,700 still gathered there, while another 3,300 had been sent to a camp prepared for them, the army said.

Near end of vacation, Yeltsin attacked by Communist rival

MOSCOW (AP) — Boris Yeltsin's long-time Communist rival took a new potshot at the Russian president Friday, even as Mr. Yeltsin was wrapping up his vacation on the Volga River.

Communist leader, Gennady Zyuganov accused Mr. Yeltsin of being too active instead of enjoying his vacation, and of waging an all-out offensive against the nation.

"A man on vacation should be smiling, and he is acting by threats and shouts," Mr. Zyuganov said. He was referring to a stern reproof given by Mr. Yeltsin to his authoritarian Belarusian counterpart, Alexander Lukashenko after the arrest of two Russian television journalists in Belarus.

Mr. Yeltsin did keep a remarkably busy schedule for a man on vacation, boasting about fishing and playing tennis, sweating in

a bathhouse, as well as issuing a number of decrees and appearing nightly on television. Mr. Yeltsin is expected to return to Moscow Monday after the month-long vacation.

On Friday, Yeltsin met with Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin and Central Bank Chief Sergei Dubinin, issued a statement condemning the bombing at a vegetable market in Jerusalem, and announced he will bring together leaders of feuding Georgia and Abkhazia for a "serious conversation" on reaching a peace settlement.

"Yeltsin is consuming the last of his life strength to apply pressure aimed at the destruction of the main structures of our society," Mr. Zyuganov told reporters.

Mr. Zyuganov lashed out at Mr. Yeltsin for rejecting a controversial bill on reli-

gion that would have placed tight restrictions on many religious groups in Russia, including Catholics and Evangelical Christians.

Mr. Yeltsin's decision was welcomed by international leaders and human rights groups, but Mr. Zyuganov blasted it as "spiritual aggression, which has crossed all borders of decency."

The Communist leader also criticised last week's sale of shares in a state-run communications company, which brought the government \$1.875 billion in revenues.

"The economic foundation of Russian statehood is being destroyed," Mr. Zyuganov said. "The fattest pieces of property have been given to individual predators."

"The president does not recognise what he is doing," Mr. Zyuganov said.

New cracks appear in dikes along German side of Oder

HOHENWUTZEN (R) — Thousands of German soldiers and aid workers were waging an increasingly desperate battle Saturday to shore up new weak spots in dikes along the Oder River that risk unleashing massive floods.

A crack 15 metres (yards) long and in places as much as 10 centimetres wide appeared overnight in the most fragile dike, by the village of Hohenwutzen, with fissures also emerging in two other dike sections nearby.

A spokesman for the flood crisis committee in nearby Bad Freienwalde said soldiers and aid workers had all three weak spots under control and were now shoring up a crack in the dike further south by Ratzdorf.

The failure of the Hohenwutzen dike would flood an area 17 kilometres wide and 50 kilometres long on

Germany's border with Poland, submerging dozens of villages, farms and factories.

Soldiers and aid workers were felling trees in the area to allow helicopters to fly in and drop yet more sand to reinforce the dike.

Earlier, German soldiers had managed to plug a crack in the dike close to the village of Zollbruecke but a Brandenburg state official said the situation there remained critical.

The German army has staged a spectacular effort to save the dikes, deploying thousands of soldiers, dozens of helicopters and tons of sand and gravel to fill spots in the dike that slide away under the pressure of the water.

But now, after nearly two weeks of constant toiling in which whole villages have come out to help, filling hundreds of thousands of sandbags, it is becoming

more likely that the river will prove too great a foe.

"We must have hope but the chances are not great," said Matthias Platzeck, environment minister of Brandenburg state.

"There is not a single point in the dike now where there isn't a problem," he added.

"We can see that this permanent water pressure is slowly making the dike sodden along the whole stretch of the river," Mr. Platzeck said.

The flood waters have already claimed more than 100 lives in Poland and the Czech Republic. They have threatened the entire Oderbruch Basin for more than a week, weakening the dikes to the point of collapse.

The last time a break in the dike flooded the Oderbruch region was in 1947 near Reitwein. Before that there was a break near Zollbruecke in 1838 and a

few miles further south in Guestebieser loose a break was prevented in 1917.

The region is vulnerable because it lies below the river, which presses against the twists and turns in the dike as the Oder runs north and empties into the Baltic Sea.

The Oderbruch Basin was created 250 years ago by Frederick the Great of Prussia, who drained the swamps and redirected the route of the Oder, gaining a huge valley of arable land as part of Prussia's eastward expansion.

But weeks of flooding and relentless rainstorms seem to be driving the river to seek its original banks, which are now covered with fields of grains, golden sunflowers and sugar beets.

Around 15,000 people have been evacuated from the region since last week and thousands more warned to be ready to leave their homes at a moment's notice.

Sri Lanka's latest battle casualties exceed 200

COLOMBO (R) — More than 100 Tamil Tiger rebels were killed when the guerrillas attacked government troops in Sri Lanka's northern Wanni region, a Defence Ministry spokesman said Saturday.

He said the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE) rebels attacked the military's defensive positions near Ommathai, just north of the government-held town of Vavuniya, which lies some 220 kilometres north of the capital Colombo.

"One hundred LTTE bodies have been recovered and we believe their dead and wounded should be 200," he told Reuters.

The spokesman said four soldiers and 10 policemen were also killed in the attack and 30 were wounded.

The military, which launched a major offensive in May, is battling rebels in the Wanni to open a strategic highway linking the

northern Jaffna Peninsula with the rest of the island. The military officials said defences guarded by police and the navy had been breached but troops had linked up again after repulsing Friday's attack.

A Defence Ministry statement said a large number of rebels used mortars and other arms to launch seven assaults on the troops and the confrontation continued into the early hours of Saturday.

"All these assaults were very effectively repulsed," the statement said, adding that MI-24 helicopters and (air force) Kfir jets caused further casualties to the fleeing rebels.

The Defence Ministry spokesman said clearing operations in the affected area were taking place and more bodies were likely to be recovered.

Residents in Vavuniya said some of the wounded had been brought to the hospital there before being sent

to Anuradhapura military base, some 50 kilometres further south. An undisclosed number of wounded had also been airlifted to Anuradhapura, they said.

Residents said troops had shelled the affected area through the night and well into Saturday morning.

Military officials in the north said the LTTE launched the attack around 10.30 p.m. and fighting continued through most of the night.

There was no immediate statement from the LTTE on the latest battle.

The military's northward offensive has slowed since the LTTE launched two fierce counterattacks in June but the fighting has shown signs of escalating this week.

Sri Lanka's Defence Ministry said Friday that troops had clashed with a large number of LTTE rebels southwest of Nedunkent town Thursday. At least 50 guerrillas and

17 troops, including one officer, was killed in the gun battle. Troops had called in helicopter gunships to engage the rebels, who fled northwards with their wounded, the statement said.

"Sri Lanka forces backed by heavy artillery and moving in battle-tanks and armoured vehicles had attempted a sudden push towards their goal of Puliyankulam, but LTTE forces hit back decisively," an LTTE statement said.

The statement did not say how many LTTE fighters had been killed or wounded in the battle.

The LTTE have been fighting for a separate homeland for minority Tamils in Sri Lanka's north and east since 1983.

The government says more than 50,000 people have been killed in the war. The LTTE say the toll is higher.

Artillery duels continue north of Kabul

KABUL (R) — Taleban and opposition forces continued a fierce artillery duel north of Kabul Saturday, but there was no change in the front line according to eyewitnesses.

An opposition plane dropped at least one bomb on Taleban positions around the village of Hussein Kot, some 19 kilometres north of the Afghan capital, Saturday morning.

Taleban gunners pounded the opposition, who hold a salient of territory running south to within 21 kilometres of Kabul.

The front lines have

remained relatively stable since an advance by the anti-Taleban alliance two weeks ago. The Taleban have retaken some high ground overlooking the alliance's positions, but there have been no major movements.

Reports from Mazar-e-Sharif, the opposition's headquarters in the north of the country, indicated that more than 1,000 opposition fighters have moved towards Kabul in preparation for an attack on the city.

An analyst in Kabul said Saturday that the current

stalemate could not continue indefinitely.

"Neither side can be happy with the way things are now. Having the opposition so close to Kabul undermines the Taleban claim to being the only force that can control the country," said the analyst, who did not want to be named.

He said the forces of opposition commander, Ahmed Shah Masoud were vulnerable to the Taleban guns. "One of them is going to have to make a move soon," he said.

Travellers from the north

say that the opposition is rebuilding a broken bridge on the road that serves as a vital supply route to the front lines north of Kabul over the Hindu Kush Mountain range to the north of the country.

The bridge was destroyed by the opposition to stop a Taleban advance in January that looked as though it might penetrate the north of the country.

The broken bridge effectively prevents any new heavy equipment reaching the front lines near Kabul from the north of Afghanistan.

1 killed in a 3rd deadly grenade attack in Kampala

KAMPALA (AFP) — An eight-year-old girl was killed when unidentified assailants threw a grenade at a police station here overnight, the third such attack in the city this week, state-owned radio reported Saturday.

The latest casualty brought to nine the number of people killed in the raids since Wednesday.

Seven other people were seriously injured, including three policemen and a 15-year-old girl, in Friday's explosion in Kampala's Nakulabye suburb.

Local newspapers reported that the dead girl, who was visiting her father in the police station, had her head blown off by the blast.

The attacker is reported to have thrown the grenade as he rode a motorcycle past the police post.

Eight people died Wednesday and more than 40 others were injured when two grenades were thrown from a moving car at a police post in the Kibuye suburb of the city.

On Thursday, a man in a saloon car threw another grenade at a police post in Nateete, also a Kampala suburb, but nobody was hurt in that attack.

The police later pursued the car, and arrested a man.

Local newspapers quoted Inspector General of Police Cossy Odomei, as saying that police were the target of the attacks and that "hard core criminals" were behind the raids.

However, the independent Crusader newspaper reported it had received an anonymous telephone call which claimed responsibility for the attack on behalf of the Allied Democratic Forces rebel group, based in the west of the country and led by Herbert Itongwa, a former major in Uganda.

"Some people have been saying that it could take us time to reach the city, but we assure them that we are within," the caller said.

He said major hotels, banks and other places visited by foreigners would be attacked.

There are currently two major rebel groups operating in the west and north of Uganda, but this week's raids are the first insurgency-related violence in Kampala in many years.

Albania urges population to help rebuild nation

TIRANA (R) — Albania's leaders said Saturday that restoring order was the key to rebuilding the Balkan state and called on the population to help to bring about a return to normality.

President Rexhep Mejdani, Prime Minister Fatos Nano and other top-level officials held a news conference on the return of a delegation to Italy to

secure international support for Albania's revival.

"I would like to invite all Albanians to walk together on this road ... To realise to the maximum our extraordinary possibilities for a better life with more dignity," Mr. Mejdani said.

The international community pledged at a meeting in Rome this week to help Albania rebuild itself,

but warned that the new government must restore public order, improve human rights and adopt sound economic policies.

"The Albanian government has undertaken a difficult duty to restore public and democratic order and to revive the economy," said Fatos Nano, the new head of the Socialist-led coalition government elected in June.

The collapse of bogus investment schemes earlier this year swallowed thousands of Albanians' life savings and triggered months of anarchy which led to the fall of the democratic party government and the resignation of President Sali Berisha.

Interior Minister Neritan Ceka said police forces had already started to crackdown on armed

bands terrorising the population in the lawless areas of the country.

More than 1,500 people have been killed in violence since March, when Albanians looted an estimated one million weapons from army and police depots.

"Our short-term aim is to take control of key routes and fight armed gangs in the towns so that order and

calm can be restored in the first stage," said Mr. Ceka.

He said seven armed street bands had been destroyed so far but that outbreaks of violence continued to be a problem in the southern towns of Vlore and Berat and on the roads linking towns to the capital Tirana.

The minister said Italy had promised to provide Albania's police with two

armoured personnel carriers, cars and minivans and radio equipment by the end of August.

A meeting of international donors in Brussels in October is due to examine ways to provide aid in the form of approved projects in line with the Albanian government's programme.

Jordan Times

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Preparing the field

NOW THAT celebrations of our achievements at the Pan-Arab Games are nearly over, serious work lies ahead. A process of self-evaluation should accompany our plans and preparations for hosting the biggest sports event staged in the Kingdom — the 9th Games in Amman in 2001. Jordanian athletes performed beyond expectations when they returned with the biggest haul of medals, including more gold medals than in the past seven Pan-Arab Games combined. No one can underestimate that achievement. The whole country joined them in celebration. It was evident in every corner of the Kingdom after the crowning win on the soccer field. Our champions should be well-rewarded for their effort.

Yet, while celebrating victory is important, the move by the Jordan Olympic Committee of meeting the participating federations starting today to review their results and discuss future plans is to be commended. The rewards bestowed upon the soccer team were expected since soccer is the most popular sport in the country, but the accomplishment of other athletes and federations should not go unnoticed. That, in turn, should translate into the funding and support each federation receives from the Ministry of Culture and Youth. While the ministry is constrained by the annual allocation to sports, a balanced budget that corresponds with the annual agendas of various sports federations is of utmost importance.

The call by officials for many years for a sports fund that would provide the necessary funding for our teams to reach a competitive form, whether on the regional or international levels, should be adopted. Our athletes were celebrated because officials knew that their feats came about regardless of the lack of facilities and funding. Although their training was hampered, it was dedication and stretching the limit of their efforts that enabled them to achieve glory for the country. That in turn applies to Jordan's bid to host the Games in 2001.

While we may be sure of our organisational abilities, the country needs to be prepared for the event. We need the necessary infrastructure especially stadiums, official courts, timing machines — things we lack in local championships. We must also remember that Beirut was a turning point for Jordanian sports. We need to look back at our results and do better in the future. We need to double the 10 gold, 8 silver and 21 bronze medals we obtained. Officials should provide the funding; the athletes the dedication and hard work. Only if we better our results can we boast that Jordanian sports are on the right track.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

A WRITER for Al Ra'i daily criticised the German government for its recent decision to return 50,000 Palestinians who have been working in Germany to Lebanon and said that the Palestinians should have been repatriated to their Palestinian homeland. The German government realises the situation in the Middle East and the fact that the Israelis have caused the displacement of the Palestinians who had to seek refuge first in Lebanon and then in Germany, said Ibrahim Absi. We do not deny that Germany, through the European Union (EU) has been demanding the return of the Palestinian rights in their own homeland, said the writer. Germany, whose people had suffered a great deal from wars and displacement, had paid billions of dollars to Israel in compensation for Nazi Germany's persecution of the Jews, and so it helped the Zionists to take hold of the Palestinian lands, said the writer. He said that Lebanon, which has so far offered refuge to the Palestinians, does not serve as a Palestinian homeland and the German government, through the EU, should have pressured Israel to repatriate these Palestinians; but if it cannot do that for the time being, at least it should allow these displaced people to live in Germany until the time when the world community can implement U.N. Security Council resolutions that safeguard the Palestinian people's right in Palestine.

A WRITER for Al Arab Al Yawm reflected on Israel's demands to inherit funds allegedly deposited by Jews in Swiss banks during the Nazi rule in Germany. Riham Farra said that by doing so Israel has set the stage for the Arabs, particularly the Palestinians, to follow suit and demand that Arab property and funds lost to Israel since the occupation of Palestinian lands in 1948 be returned to the victims of war, or their inheritors. The writer said Israel is demanding to receive funds and property which allegedly belonged to German Jews who have no Israeli nationality. The Arab demand can be made through the Arab League which can claim the property left in Palestine after the 1948 war, and the funds deposited by Arabs in the Barclays Bank and other banks under the British Mandate in Palestine, stressed the writer. She said Arabs who were displaced but have since acquired citizenships of foreign countries should be allowed to retrieve their property and funds seized by the Israelis upon occupying Palestine. If Israel is demanding that the funds of Jews in Swiss banks should be sent to Israel which could hand them over to the Jews in other countries, the Arab League must also be able to demand that not only the Palestinian people's funds be returned but also the Iraqi people's frozen assets, still in Western banks, so that the Arab League can return them to the Iraqi citizens.

Sunday's Economic Pulse

Middle East market does not exist

ARAB RESEARCHERS do not seem to get tired or bored of talking about the pros and cons of the Middle East market, even though this project never existed, formally or informally, except in the imagination of those researchers who are looking for possible disasters to project, claiming that four million Israeli Jews are getting ready to swallow the 250 million Arab Nation.

The only reference to the idea of a Middle East market is in the book "The New Middle East" by Shimon Peres, minister of foreign affairs under the late Rabin. The book was described by some commentators as visionary or a blueprint for a new Middle East, but most commentators think of it as a combination of personal imagination and wishful thinking. The contents of the book were never taken seriously. They are subjected to ridicule in Israel itself.

Aside from this book, there is no solid project to establish a Middle East market. No official body ever came up with a project on the issue. No Arab government ever received such a project. The only material concerning this idea can be found in journalistic columns and papers

which appeared following the signing, at the White House, of the Declaration of Principles agreed upon between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) in 1993. At that time, observers and analysts were under the wrong impression that the train of peace had taken off and no power on earth could stop it.

Arab researchers felt the need to deal with the subject and issue warnings of the risks involved. They are unwilling to take note of the fact that Israel, as represented by the present Likud government, does not want to open up to the Arab Middle East. It prefers to maintain the fortress mentality. It wants to continue to look at Europe, America and the Far East as partners in trade, finance and culture. Israel is by no means geared to adapt itself to the Middle East region.

The myth of a Middle Eastern market is similar to the myth of a "New World Order" which was celebrated by the researchers at Al Ahran Centre for Political and Strategic Studies. They spent most of their time trying to tell us about the dimensions of the new order and its

drastic impact on our future life. We know by now that the so called New World Order was a slip of the tongue of the American President George Bush's speechwriter by way of justifying the war against Iraq in 1990/1991.

The expression "New World Order" was never mentioned again by any American official simply because America is not interested in a new world order or, for that matter, in any order, as long as it is sitting on top of the present world disorder, able to act as it wishes, without having to abide by an agreed set of rules that may restrict its ability to act to enhance its national interest.

The researchers at Al Ahran Centre needed two or three years before they discovered the myth and ceased to advocate or analyse it. However, some Arab researchers may need ten years or more to realise that the Middle East market is not an option placed on the table for the Arabs to take or leave. The major obstacle in the face of the idea is that it is rejected outright by Israel. Another, equally important, obstacle is that Arab regimes refuse to open up to each other, which is obviously a requirement for any common market.

By Dr. Fahed Fanek

Middle East — is it the end of the peace process?

By Gwynne Dyer

IS THE peace process between Israel and the Palestinians dead?

No, said Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy after a meeting with Palestinian Planning Minister Nabil Shaath in Jerusalem on July 28. Talks on outstanding issues from the 1993 Oslo peace accords, suspended since Israel began building a huge new Jewish suburb in East (formerly Arab) Jerusalem in March, would resume next week.

Approximately 40 hours later, two massive bombs exploded in Mahane Yehuda, the crowded main fruit and vegetable market in Jerusalem, killing at least 14 people and injuring over 150. The vast majority of the victims were Jews, and the suicide bombers were presumed to be Palestinians, allegedly from the Islamic Jihad group that rejects the whole peace process.

The bombs may cause Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to postpone the resumption of talks with the Palestinians while he berates president of the Palestinian National Authority, Yasser Arafat, for an event that neither man's security forces could prevent. But it probably will not last: all the major players in the Middle East peace process, and above all Netanyahu and Arafat, are doomed to insist that it is still alive regardless of the truth.

The cost to Netanyahu of admitting that the peace process is dead would be an immediate loss of the reflex American support he has hitherto enjoyed, and eventual electoral defeat because he would lose the support of Israeli voters who believed his promises that an aggressive settlement policy is compatible with peace.

The cost to Yasser Arafat might well be his life. If his historic gamble on making peace with Israel fails, there will be a long queue of bitter Palestinians seeking revenge for his "betrayal". So even if the negotiations are a charade, and no matter what Netanyahu or the terrorists do, both men are bound to restart the talks time and again.

The recent four-month suspension of talks, for example, was triggered by Netanyahu's decision to build a new Jewish suburb with 6,500 apartments on Har Homa/Jabal Abu Ghneim. Arafat protested and boycotted the talks, and there were large Palestinian demonstrations in Jerusalem and elsewhere.

But Netanyahu stonewalled, and the U.S. refused to condemn his actions. Arafat was desperate, for without talks this credibility among Palestinians was draining away. So when a wealthy Jewish-American was granted a permit to build

another Jewish settlement in a densely populated Palestinian district of Jerusalem, and Netanyahu's government then suspended that permit for four months, Arafat seized on the action as evidence of Netanyahu's good will and agreed to restart the talks.

But Nabil Shaath emphasised that the joint Israeli-Palestinian committees could only discuss implementation of measures already agreed, not new agreements, so long as the Har Homa development still goes ahead. And even if the Jerusalem bombs do not abort this compromise, many on both sides doubt that the talks will last long or get very far, for they doubt Netanyahu's fundamental commitment to the peace process at all. The main question in

"The cost to Netanyahu of admitting that the peace process is dead would be an immediate loss of the reflex American support he has hitherto enjoyed, and eventual electoral defeat because he would lose the support of Israeli voters who believed his promises that an aggressive settlement policy is compatible with peace."

their minds, indeed, is whether Netanyahu is a weak man who bears the impression of the last person who sat on him, or a strong man determined to sabotage the land-for-peace deal struck at Oslo in 1993. The controversy over Har Homa illustrates the confusion very well.

Many Israelis believe that Netanyahu approved the Har Homa project in February as compensation to the hardliners in his cabinet for the partial Israeli evacuation of Hebron in January. In this view, Netanyahu is a mere weather-vane, responding to the conflicting pressures within and outside his cabinet.

build settlements, but you cannot implement Oslo and Har Homa simultaneously.

Netanyahu vigorously rejects this interpretation. "I'm not a directionless man who operates on a whim. My intention and goal are completely clear. I know where I want to get to." But if he has actually chosen between settlements and peace, then it is fairly clear which he has chosen.

Har Homa is the biggest new Jewish settlement around Jerusalem since 1980. Launching that project stopped talks on implementing measures mandated by Oslo, like opening a Palestinian-controlled airport in the Gaza Strip and providing secure access for Palestinians between the Gaza Strip and the West Bank, for over four months. And many suspect that is just what Netanyahu wanted.

It hardly matters, whether Netanyahu is a man with a plan, or merely the prisoner of the contradictory currents within his own coalition of right-wing and religious parties. The outcome is the same. He has to build more settlements, and there is no hope that he can get his cabinet to accept the further withdrawals from occupied territory on the West Bank, already long delayed, that are supposed to happen later this year.

The peace process is dead, and unless the United States exerts enormous external pressure on Netanyahu it will not be revived. That is very unlikely: Whereas the Bush administration withheld aid and arms from Israel when it perceived the Israeli government to be acting against America's interest in a stable Middle East, the Clinton administration confines itself to the occasional cringing whine on the topic. So the question is, what next?

Can the present precarious stability be maintained, with a few hundred Palestinians injured by Israeli bullets each month and an occasional bomb killing and injuring comparable numbers of Israelis, but no major upheaval, until the next Israeli election in the year 2000? Even after that, would there be an Israeli government willing to negotiate on the original terms of the Oslo deal? Will all the Arab governments around Israel, which have either made peace already or shown interest in doing so, survive until 2000?

It seems highly improbable. The current wave of Palestinian protest, unleashed by the Jabal Abu Ghneim settlement, has not been violent enough to shake either Israeli security or Arafat's authority, but the situation is not going to get better. Palestinian living standards are in steep decline: per capita GNP in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip has fallen 36 per cent in the past five years.

In the same period, the number of Jewish settlers in the occupied territories has risen from 100,000 to 160,000. And in most Palestinians' eyes, the peace that is theoretically still on offer, in which Israel keeps all of Jerusalem and half of the rest of the occupied territories, is not worth having.

So is there going to be a war? Probably not this year, and probably only in Lebanon, the preferred arena when Israel and its neighbours want to avoid a direct fight.

And could the long-term peace process survive another Israeli invasion of Lebanon, provided

that Israel's losses there finally persuaded Israeli voters to replace Netanyahu with a more peace-friendly government in 2000? Impossible to say, but it would be a very brave or very foolish investor who made any long-term investments in the region in the next two or three years.

LETTERS

Victor vs. vanquished

To the Editor:

REGARDING THE article "Double suicide bombing kills 14 in Jerusalem, injures hundreds" (Jordan Times, July 31, 1997), I would like to make a few comments.

As a senior citizen living in one of the world's worst war-torn areas, I find it difficult to wisecrack seven decades away from home and country. It is becoming impossible to remain objective with a people who, without a qualm, have taken everything that is near and dear to me, namely my right to live in Jerusalem, or even visit my city.

It is easily noted that throughout the twentieth century, Jewish/Israeli blood has been expensive and spilling Palestinian/Arab blood has always been viewed as a punitive measure, a lesson to be taught and a necessary evil.

From the Middle Ages until the late nineteenth century, due the Christian Inquisition and other Christian practices, Jews were driven to seek asylum and security in Muslim lands. The Nazi Holocaust era drove them to Palestine. To appease their conscience, the Western

powers guided them to Palestine in the wake of emerging and simmering anti-Semitic feelings in the U.S. and Europe and thus chose to drive the Palestinians elsewhere.

Today, the Israelis in general and the Jews in particular can only blame themselves for the deteriorating Muslim-Jewish relations in light of the Palestinian-Arab-Israeli conflict yet to be solved. There are no right or wrong moral standards. The victor lays down the next form of punishment, while the vanquished can only think of new ways to end the daily harassment.

What has the world done about the ever-increasing Middle Eastern small wars of the twentieth century, be they civil or border clashes. Fact-finding commissions and their reports are constantly swept under the carpet until the new problems crop up again.

I wonder whether it is feasible, through modern technology, to get a general hit list head count, just for the record.

Leila Hussein Fakhri Al Khalidi, Amman.

Time to act sensibly

To the Editor:

IT IS always a time of mourning when civilians are struck, and the dead at the Israeli market are certainly no exception. Decades of war and semi-war conditions have led to the present condition. And as usual, the American President Clinton followed the Israeli lead and blamed the entire thing on the Palestinians.

Conveniently forgotten were nearly 50 years of Israeli expansion and the continuous confiscation of Arab lands in what the U.S. now calls "disputed territories". American readers will be exposed to one to two weeks of "stories" on this disaster to reinforce the Israeli point that Arabs, especially the Muslims, are terrorists. This is a pattern that was successfully set in the 19th century in the then colonial United States.

The first meetings with the Indians, as they became known, were peaceful. Indeed, it was the native peoples of the Americas that taught the invading white man how to grow corn and how to survive. (There are parallels to this in early 20th century Palestine.) As the European became stronger, however, he took a more combative position in regards to the Indians. The same happened in Palestine.

The stories of Indian women and chil-

dren getting slaughtered in the "American West" were true. The soldiers were convinced that they were all "savages." Now we use the word "terrorist" to denote anyone who does not agree with us. The same thing is taking place in Palestine. And as the Palestinians use their emotions and play into the hands of their enemies, their grief will increase.

It is time for a more measured response to the problem, while there is still time, one that will involve the entire Arab Nation, acting in concert. That is what Israel really fears. That is what must take place to save the situation.

The actions must arise out of reason, not out of emotional response. A long-term effort to sway world public opinion must take place, and the grounds for this should be laid very soon. A study of the Treaty of Al Hudaibiyyah, and the actions of the Prophet would be an excellent place to start. It was that treaty that enabled the Prophet to separate his enemies and to establish foreign ties and proved the effectiveness of political maneuvers to achieve his goals.

Heart is important, but only when combined with reason, thought and patience.

S. B. Cassidy RIVME @pacbell.net

Rational celebration

To the Editor:

SHOOTING AT weddings or after sports victories has become common in Jordan. Actually, it has become an outstanding psychological phenomenon in our society. It seems that we cannot express our joy without crowning it with deaths or injuries.

Several people were injured in Amman last week as a result of celebrating our victory in the Pan-Arab Games in Beirut.

It put us all in a state of fear, instead of joy. My family and I were scared to even sit in our garden for fear of a stray bullet. That evening I waited for my children to come back home safe as if we were in a state of war.

There is nothing wrong with celebrating a victory, as long as it is done rationally.

Suad Bitar Alul, Amman.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any issue they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld upon request but only under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing and abridging.

Germany

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Germany' tolerance of Islam — is there a 'secret wish'?

By Lucas Delattre

IN AN open letter Günter Grass recently called for the establishment of a "Mosque on the Kialamm." The writer bases his demand for an Islamic House of God on Berlin's "Champs Elysees" on the simple fact that Muslims are now the third largest religious community in Germany — after Catholics and Protestants. To show that this state of affairs is, in his opinion, here to stay, the author of "The Tin Drum" compares the situation facing Muslims today with the plight of French Huguenots at the end of the 17th century, who were "driven out of Catholic France, fled to Berlin, and established their churches in this city." With 2.6 million adherents, Islam in Germany constitutes an important force that cannot be overlooked, especially as there are already 2,000 mosques or religious centres in the country. In Cologne alone, the city with the greatest agglomeration of Muslims in Germany, today there live 70,000 adherents of Islam with 100 religious centres. Dortmund provides another example. In some parts of this large Ruhr industrial city, up to 40 per cent of the inhabitants are Turks who came to Germany towards the end of the sixties to work in the region's factories. Here as elsewhere the Islamic presence, which is mainly linked with Turkish immigration, is becoming ever more visible. After all that does involve around

two million people.

Dortmund's largest mosque is at Kielstraße 12 in the north of the city. It was established in a former Protestant church where the facade was simply painted white and green. By chance the building was facing towards Mecca. Attendance is mounting all the time, and remarkably this is mainly among the young. During Ramadan the mosque is packed. On Fridays the faithful sometimes have to follow the prayers from the street. "The Kielstraße mosque community is attracting more and more people at a time when Christian churches are emptying," remarks Falk Meinert, a social worker employed by the city to organise vocational training for young foreigners. The majority of the faithful here are Turks, so the mosque offers the Sunnite ritual — as is usually the case in Germany. The prayers are spoken in Arabic, which means that those present only have a fragmentary understanding, except for a few Moroccans, Algerians or Syrians. However, increasingly many young Turks, who want to return to the roots of Islam, are beginning to learn Arabic, especially in Berlin which is called the "largest Turkish city outside Turkey."

The imams in Dortmund's great mosque are appointed by the Turkish state. It is one of many mosques controlled by Diitib or Diyanet (the Turkish-Islamic Union of the Office of Religion),

which is directly dependent on the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Ankara. Diitib, the preferred partner of German officials, embodies the Turkish tradition of a secularised Islam with great capacity for adapting to Western society. But this is the only one of Dortmund's thirty Islamic religious centres to be administered in this way. When one enters a mosque that is not controlled by Diyanet, it is difficult for an outsider to recognise immediately whether this is exclusively a place of prayer or a centre for social gatherings with a political emphasis.

The omnipresent Turkish influence is particularly striking. Every mosque — or almost everyone — has a football club, usually with Turkish flags. Even nationalist, Ottoman banners with three crescents hang on the walls there. "Dissident" mosques, which seem to be the rule, are maintained by numerous societies which for some years now have been attempting to free themselves from the control of the Turkish authorities.

All aspects of Turkish Islam are thus represented in Germany where they have more resources and greater freedom of expression than in Turkey itself, even though state officials keep under surveillance the activities of the most committed militants. For all these anti-Kemalist organisations — of which the Milli Görüs Islamic Community, linked with the Welfare Party of the ex-

prime minister, Necmettin Erbakan, is the best known — Germany has been a "base-camp" since the seventies, permitting a slow reconquering of Turkey by Islam.

Erbakan himself lived in Germany for many years, establishing the necessary foundation of his political career. Today it is mainly young Turks from the third generation to be born in Germany that increasingly turn again to the Koran. In both France and Germany this trend is clearly apparent — as is shown by Wilhelm Heitmeyer's study for Bielefeld University. The sociologist speaks of Turks born in Germany "retreating" into Islam. These are Turks who speak German better than Turkish, but cannot be German nationals, because German law is based on "blood ties."

If one believes what the leaders of Milli Görüs say or write, Germany offers ideal soil for strengthening Islam. In fact it is true that the German society is surprisingly tolerant. People perhaps remember that Annemarie Schimmel, the most important German orientalist, publicly proclaimed her rejection of the "Satanic Verses," which she saw as being "blasphemous," without, however, accepting the fatwa against Salman Rushdie. Only recently Lufthansa made known that it could not take Rushdie on its planes since customers had to be protected against possible attacks. Quite unlike France

where the emphasis is on trying to establish an "Islam à la Française" open to laicism, in Germany people have nothing against public proclamation of one's faith. In a country where state and religion are not absolutely clearly separated, Islam can certainly become much more powerful than elsewhere.

For Rémy Laveau, a scholar of Islam based in Berlin (at the Marc Bloch Centre for the Social Sciences), this "unusual compliance" on the part of the German society derives from the 1555 Peace of Augsburg which prescribed division of the country into Catholic and Protestant parts, thereby establishing freedom of belief in public life.

"What shocks Germans," remarks Claire de Galember, author of a work on the relationship between Christian churches and Islam — "is not so much Islam, which does not even involve three per cent of the German population, as atheism, accounting for 25 per cent of the population." The great public debates on relations between church and state were devoted to the spread of atheism rather than the growth of Islam. The dispute over whether someone should be able to take down a crucifix in a Bavarian classroom ended up with the constitutional court in Karlsruhe. A comparable scenario in the realm of Islam would be unimaginable. In addition, public opinion in Germany does

not confuse Islam and fanaticism, and no unfounded connections are made between the Koran and terrorist threats. Algeria is far away for Germans. With regard to acts of violence involving Turks, people at most think of the conflict between Turks and Kurds. "There is no religious basis for this conflict even if both sides use religious reasons as a legitimisation," says Amid Bozarslan, a French researcher from Berlin who is well informed about Kurdish problems. If racism in Germany is directed against Turks, that does not usually involve any rejection of Islam. Unlike the situation in France, this results from the fact that Muslims in Germany largely identify with their homeland. They have kept their nationality and most of them want to be buried in Turkey — even though for some years there have been Islamic cemeteries here.

That is also why there has been no upheaval in Germany over the Islamic headscarf. The German society finds it easier to accept everyday demonstrations of religious forms — such as Muslim women's headscarf. The unavoidable conflicts that occurred here and there were for the most part resolved at the local level, often with compromises in favour of Muslims. Such disputes divide Turks rather than Germans and Muslims. At the beginning of the eighties, a Kemalist Turkish woman teacher in

Berlin protested to the German authorities about a pupil wearing a headscarf. This young girl was also Turkish but she had grown up in a spirit of anti-Kemalism.

German neighbours in the residential area around the Dortmund mosque are not worried about the presence of another religious community. There were neither protests nor petitions when the mosque was established in the Kielstraße. However, just a little later, the authorities received an anonymous letter of complaint concerning a very specific point. Someone living nearby had noticed that in the mosque building there was also a grocer's shop, and as a good citizen he wanted to know whether the requisite trade tax had been paid.

All the same, it would be misguided to overestimate capacity for integration of Islam in the German society just because of the obvious tolerance. Even though in Dortmund religious centres could be set up without great problems, other cases demonstrate resistance by local populations.

Very often — as at Pforzheim in Baden-Württemberg — the local authorities oppose establishment of a mosque with objections to the height of minarets or amplification of the muezzin's call to prayer. It is not rare either for Protestant clergymen — as in Pforzheim and Duisburg — to join such protests, declaring that "the Muslim God is not the Christian God."

At government level there is no lack of good intentions, involving long-term integration of Islam in the nation. However, even though all the big religions are accorded the privilege of corporate status under public law with the right (if so desired) to levy a church tax among believers and to be represented in many public institutions such as the media, hospitals and the army, Islam has still not been granted this recognition by the German authorities. That is all the more astonishing since the Orthodox Church already has this status, and Jehovah's Witnesses in Berlin are close to receiving it.

Bonn's argument is that Islamic institutions are too splintered and diverse to be represented by a single voice. In reality the state, mediated by way of organised Islam, seems to want to uphold much stricter controls.

"The heart of the matter" — according to Valérie Amiaux — "is that Islam constitutes an important element in German foreign policy, especially in relations with Turkey." In light of that analysis one understands why in various German Laender Islam forms a part of religious studies at state schools with teachers from Turkey usually entrusted with this task. Perhaps the secret wish, explaining German tolerance towards Islam, is that Turks will one day want to return to Turkey.

Le Monde

McDonald's — America's toppling empire

By Ed Vulliamy and Cal McCrystal

OVER AN Oklahoma ridge they rumble in perpetual motion tens of millions of churning feet destined to sustain an empire and satisfy a growing imperial hunger. Below the ridge, the town of Guymon offers an unforgettable view of the mighty American hamburger on the hoof. The horizon is brown and thick and endless with beef cattle hurrying to the knife, the hook and the heated bun.

For more than 30 years, the zenith of the empire has been McDonald's. Nearly 20,000 outlets have been established throughout the world with a measured tread and precision of serried rank that would have been the envy of Caesar's centurions.

It is the world's largest restaurant chain and America's biggest purchaser of beef. Annual worldwide sales are \$24 billion and rising. One in 15 Americans have worked for the company, which has replaced the U.S. army as the country's premier job-training organisation.

But beneath the steaming clouds billowing from the herds crossing Guymon ridge — and everywhere else where burger beef is processed for the masses — trouble lurks. Civil war helped bring down Rome, even as its foreign possessions continued to expand. Recent news from McDonald's headquarters in Oak Brook, Illinois, suggests certain echoes of that decline.

Undaunted in its aim to overrun the modern world, Big Mac nevertheless is locked into civil war in America as rival burger firms — among them Burger King and Wendy's — take on a hitherto unbeaten emperor.

McDonald's has launched a domestic price war with these rivals, in a desperate effort to arrest a chronic decline in sales at home. The course of the conflict will be closely monitored, not only in the U.S. but also in Britain where there are 750 McDonald's outlets trying — successfully so far — to beat off challenges from Indian and Thai take-aways.

Other ethnic providers, such as sushi bars and taco joints, are also on the march

in British cities. "Sushi has become popular because it's healthy and exciting," says Ahcene Chikhaoui, of Moshi Moshi Sushi in London's Liverpool Street, one of two such establishments to open recently in the city. "We have a huge queue every lunch-time, not far from McDonald's whose customers we are beginning to attract."

Rosemary Morrison, of the Hotel and Catering International Management Association, says oriental food has come to be seen as healthier and suggests: "Perhaps burgers and chips have had their day."

Yet McDonald's is far from ready to retreat from the British High Street. The company expects to open 100 new outlets annually until 2000. Having penetrated France and Germany and the rest of the European Union, it is now thriving in Russia and Eastern Europe. It is even operating in China and in India, where it has substituted mutton for beef. But its difficulties at home have prompted some to question its invulnerability abroad.

"It is the world's largest restaurant chain and America's biggest purchaser of beef. Annual worldwide sales are \$24 billion and rising. One in 15 Americans have worked for the company, which has replaced the U.S. army as the country's premier job-training organisation."

To them, Big Mac, famous for never missing opportunities in a restless marketplace, is reminiscent of Virgil's Monstrum, horrendum, informe, ingens cui lumen ademptum (A monster, horrible, unshapely, gigantic and eyeless).

What went wrong? In The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire, Edward Gibbon declared: "... the decline of Rome was the natural and inevitable effect of immoderate greatness." "Prosperity ripened the principle of decay; the causes of destruction multiplied with the extent of conquest; and as soon as time or accident had removed the artificial supports, the

stupendous fabric yielded to the pressure of its own weight."

Fast food's Golden Arches, devised by a man called Ray Kroc and his bosses the McDonald brothers in 1955, are an instantly and universally recognised trademark on the mere motion of which \$1 billion is spent each year. There are more than half-a-million Americans on the McDonald's payroll. But like all history's great empires, McDonald's is now over-stretched, a fact that has encouraged the "barbarians" to move in.

Latter-day Goths, in the forms of Wendy's and Burger King — a unit of Britain's Grand Metropolitan plc — are eroding the centre of empire, while the new Huns — the sushi merchants from Asia — nibble at the edges. McDonald's share of the U.S. fast food and hamburger market is now expanding less than that of its main "same store" rivals. Internal McDonald's memoranda speak of "an overt competitive attack" by Burger King.

An attempt to lure back customers with a burger called an Arch Deluxe, aimed at adult customers, flopped. Other tastes are cutting in to tempt the public palate — pre-made meals, "microwaveables" and an ever-increasing variety of Mexican, Thai, "pan-Asian" and other quick food.

If Caesar was Pontifex Maximus, then Big Mac is Morsus Maximus, and showing its fangs. From a small conference suite called the War Room above senior chairman Fred Turner's imperial office in Oak Brook, the attack is under way.

McDonald's recently

began what investors fear will be all-out war — "Campaign 55." The idea is that, in rotation, certain items from the McMenu will sell for 55 cents, if bought in conjunction with a drink and fries. It is, says food industry analyst Mitchell Speiser of Lehman Brothers, an attempt "to jump-start the business."

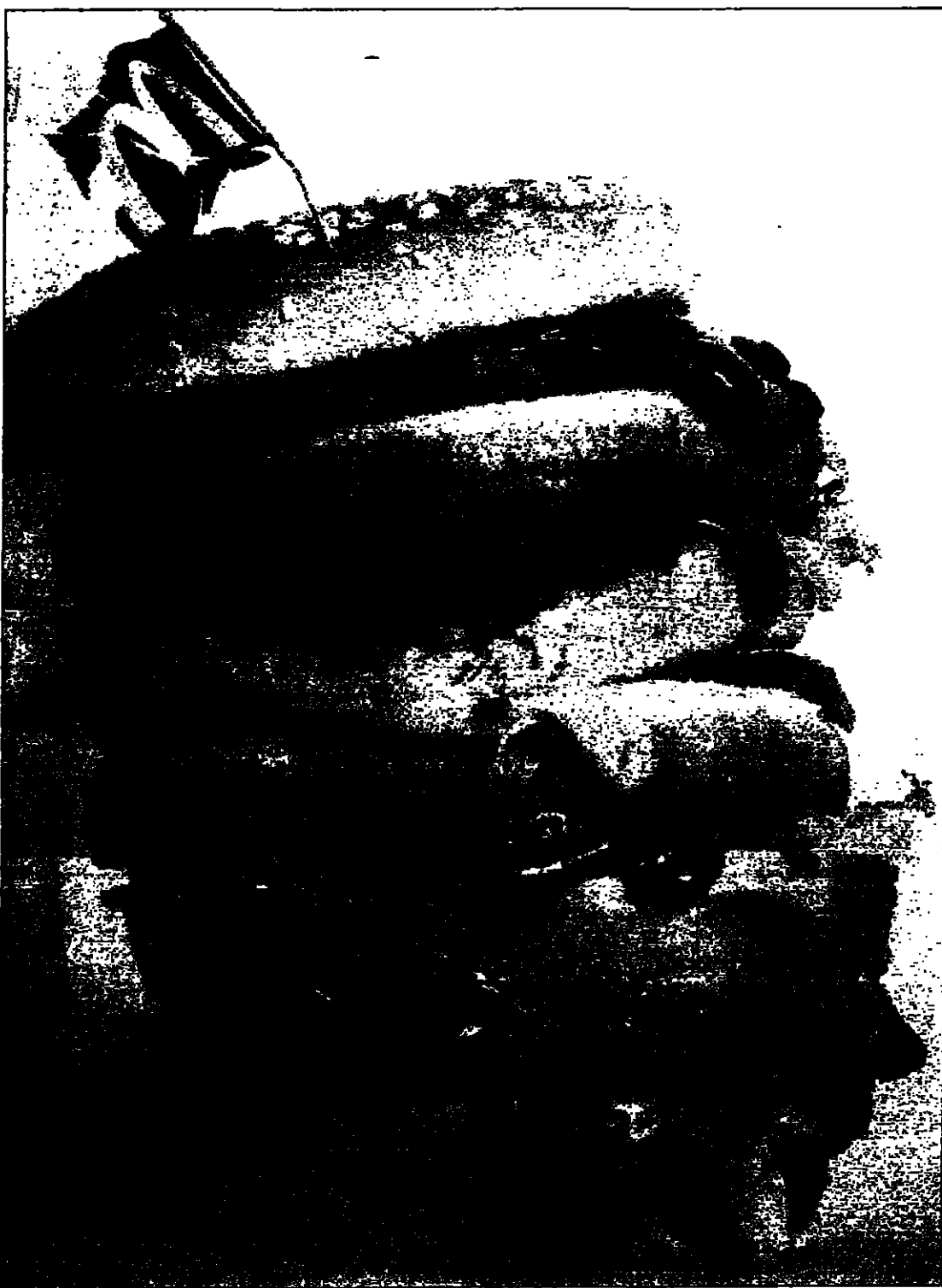
The goal of this initiative is to drive customer counts. Once the fanny is through the door, customers tend to trade up. The key is get them into the store.

The immediate effect so far, however, has been to punch the whole fast food industry in the stomach. Investors shiver at the notion of a prolonged price war.

American depository receipts of the British Grand Metropolitan group (which owns Burger King) fell by \$1 per cent, and Wendy's international by \$1.50 per cent.

"The market is reacting badly," says Terry Bivens, an analyst with Donald & Co, "because everyone expects the competition will have to match the price cut, and that profits will decline."

There is more at stake than the approval of 12,000 McDonald's franchises for Campaign 55 (unlikely to be unanimous). American food was slow to hit European tables. Until after the



World War II, no American viands, other than grapefruit, hot lobsters and shellfish, were welcomed in Europe. The soda fountain never took off. Mass production and universality were suspect, particularly when Henry Ford, looking at a Rembrandt, exclaimed: "What's the good of it? There ain't but one of it. Multiply it by a million and I'll help you circulate it."

In time America established dominion in Europe with Coca Cola, skyscrapers, gum, plucked eyebrows and hamburgers — and, along with them speed, hurry and restlessness. Fast

food represented American rootlessness too, a condition afflicting us all today. But Rome's internal troubles began with the establishment of external supremacy. On several occasions, as Rome's territory expanded, with its military renown, things fell apart at the centre, curiously enough over the question of food.

Domestic U.S. sales of McDonald's have been increasing only because of the proliferation of restaurants, and franchisees are bearing the brunt of the overstretch. One, Gerardo Perez of Sacramento, Cali-

fornia, is even suing the company for opening restaurants so close to his own that his sales and franchise value have plummeted.

There has also been a decline of the beef industry, coinciding with a rising poultry sector which has prompted McDonald's to feature its Chicken McNugget line.

Some people seek darker streaks in this cloud over Guymon ridge. Recently, the Department of Agriculture acknowledged that a new method for de-boning beef by machine had allowed some ground beef

to be contaminated with bits of spinal cord, bone and bone marrow. There have been no reported cases of BSE, but a department inspector caused a stir by describing the beef he was looking at as "blood, bone-marrow and muscle gumbo." Neither McDonald's nor Burger King use these "advanced recovery systems" for their burgers, but bad publicity for beef's general profile can do them no good.

A couple of years ago, one of Oak Brook's nobles (ennobled plebeians) remarked that no two McDonald's-served countries had gone to war with one another. But he would be less sanguine today about his own neighbourhood. Managers of Wendy's and Burger King in Manhattan had formed a phalanx against Caesar. One of them, Pedro "Pee Wee" Maldonado, who leases the Burger King branch on 23rd Street at Park Avenue, declared: "They're toying to us now — our specials are kicking their butt."

Big Mac's recipe for world domination

- McDonald's has more than 18,000 restaurant outlets in 91 countries.

- France is the third biggest overseas market for McDonald's, behind Germany and Japan but ahead of Britain.

- Britain has 750 McDonald's outlets, compared with 260 a decade ago.

- There are 43,000 restaurants, fast-food outlets and takeaways in Britain. In the five years since 1991, restaurant numbers have fallen by 7.7 per cent, most of the decrease affecting takeaways.

- Yet the U.K. fast-food/takeaway trade is the largest sector in the restaurant market, accounting for 52 per cent of all sales and increasing steadily.

- McDonald's, which claims 42 per cent of the American burger market, has one restaurant for every 80,000 people in the U.K. — only a quarter of the American figure of one for every 20,000 people.

- Since the BSE scare, McDonald's has removed British beef from the menu and now uses cattle from Ireland and Holland.

The Observer

Arab Gulf states shelve common currency plan

ABU DHABI (AFP) — Arab Gulf states have shelved plans to unify their currency exchange rates as part of a long-standing plan to create a common market, a senior Omani official said in remarks published Saturday.

Hamud Ben Hashem, executive president of the Omani Central Bank, said the issue had been discussed at several meetings of finance ministry and central bank officials in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

"All of them affirmed that exchange rates in the GCC are stable and do not constitute any restrictions on the movement of trade, investment and capital among them," he told the United Arab Emirates (UAE) daily Al Itihad.

"They agreed to continue with the current arrangements for exchange rates and postpone discussion of the common currency peg," he said.

The GCC states — Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, Oman and the UAE — had planned to create a single currency called the Gulf dinar for their planned common market, which will also include a customs union.

But they abandoned such a project and opted instead for unification of their exchange rates, a plan that has been under negotiation for years.

Bankers said the currency project was held up by reservations by some members on proposals to unlink their currencies from the U.S. dollar.

Except for Kuwait, whose dinar is tied to a basket of major currencies, the national currencies of the other GCC states are effectively linked to the dollar.

"We have agreed on encouraging expansion in using national currencies in member states and boosting coordination in monetary policies," Mr. Hashem said.

GCC countries, which created their loose economic, political and defence alliance in 1981, have set the year 2000 as a deadline for the common market.

But experts doubt the project would materialise in time as the six oil-producing countries are still haggling over a customs union, which is essential for the Gulf market.

Yemen's oil output rise by 5%

SANAA (AFP) — Yemen's oil production rose by five per cent to 390,000 barrels per day (bpd) in the second quarter of the year, from 369,000 bpd last March, the oil and mineral resources ministry announced Saturday.

The increase came from the southeastern Masila field, developed by the Canadian Occidental Petroleum Company (Canox), whose output rose to 195,400 bpd at the end of June, from 185,600 bpd, according to a ministry report.

The country's production is forecast to reach 450,000 bpd by mid-1998, because of Canox's recent discoveries in Masila, Yemen's most important oil field, and increased output elsewhere, said a senior executive at the ministry.

U.S. economic growth moderates

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Saving more and spending less, U.S. consumers put the brakes on U.S. economic growth in the second quarter, when inflation plunged to a 34-year low, the Commerce Department has said.

Gross domestic product (GDP) in the April to June period expanded at an annual rate of 2.2 per cent, down sharply from a revised 4.9 per cent in the first quarter but in line with expectations on Wall Street and at the Federal Reserve (Fed), the

U.S. central bank.

Prospects — already dim — for a move by the Fed to raise short-term interest rates to cool an overheating economy faded further on news that a price index linked to GDP increased only 1.4 per cent, the smallest rise since third quarter 1963.

"It's great news for inflation, great news for the future of interest rates," commented economist Eileen Neely at the Federal National Home Mortgage

Association.

"There's no inflation in the pipeline and the Fed can't cry wolf anymore," she said.

Acutely sensitive to signs of inflation, the Federal Reserve in March increased its benchmark federal funds rate a quarter of a point to 5.5 per cent.

But most analysts now predict that there will be no further credit tightening this year. Ms. Neely even envisages an easing in monetary policy next year.

"I believe that we are in a very healthy place right now," said Deputy Treasury Secretary Lawrence Summers.

"We are in a period of strong and stable economic expansion, fortified by the dynamism of the private sector and a healthy policy framework," he added.

The Commerce Department said growth slowed in response to weaker consumer spending, which rose at an 0.8 per cent annual rate after surging 5.3 per cent in the first quarter.

At the same time, the savings rate — savings as a per-

centage of disposable income — advanced to 4.2 per cent from 3.7 per cent in the first quarter.

David Gilmore, an analyst at Foreign Exchange Analytics, described the contraction in spending patterns as "a healthy sign," enabling the Federal Reserve to take no action on interest rates.

But Mr. Gilmore expects consumers to begin spending more, partially in response to the "wealth effect" from a booming stock market.

"With so many people invested in (stock) mutual funds, consumer sentiment should remain high," he said.

In addition, federal income tax cuts in the balanced budget agreement, expected to be signed into law this week by President Bill Clinton, should send consumers back to the store.

"It's going to encourage consumption," according to Mr. Gilmore.

"Whatever slowness we've seen in consumption is probably not going to be sustained. It should come back and continue to drive the economy," he said.

Mr. Gilmore also said "there's every indication" that the current growth rate is sustainable and agreed with Fed Chairman Alan Greenspan that "perhaps we're witnessing some kind of structural shift, probably due to technological innovation, which results in productivity gains."

ANNOUNCEMENT

THE CENTRAL BANK OF JORDAN PROOF AND UNCIRCULATED COIN SETS 1996

The Central Bank of Jordan has now available for sale proof and uncirculated coin sets dated 1996 which include eight denominations as from 3/8/1997 as follows:

Specifications	Prices in JD
Proof set in leather case	25
Uncirculated set in cardboard cover	6.5

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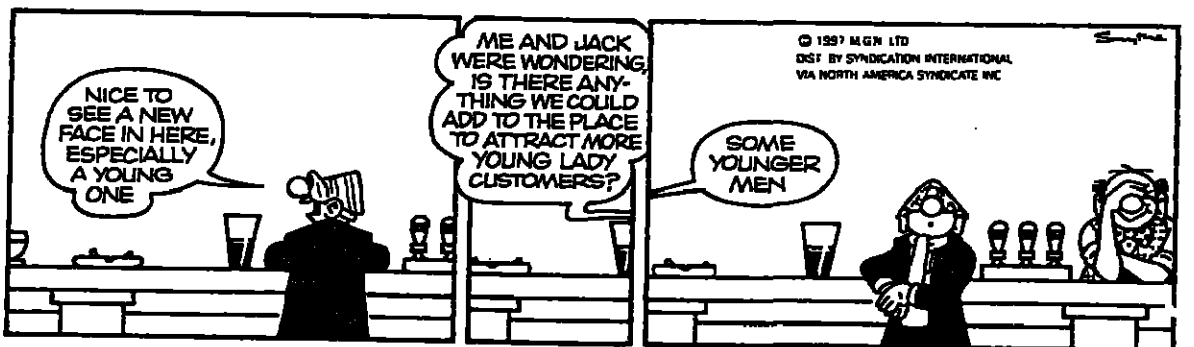
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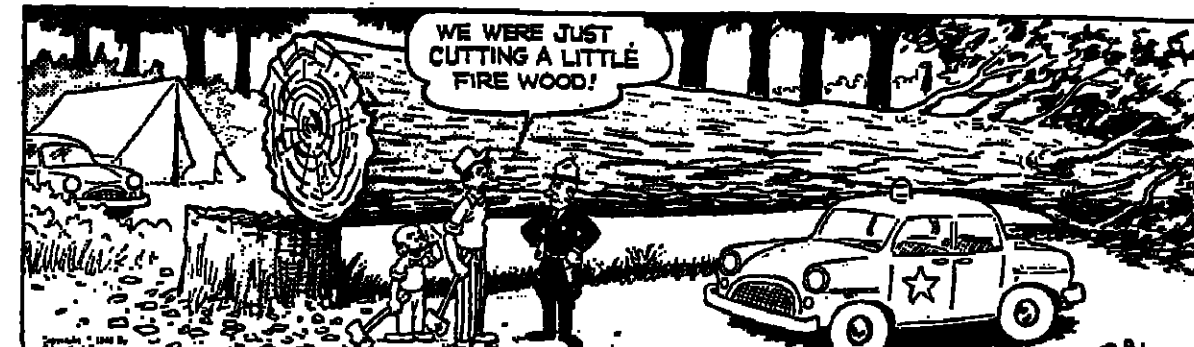
Peanuts



Andy Capp



Mutt'n'Jeff



REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	1.8288	0.9975	1.4984	115.87	1.3826	1781.00	2.0602	6.1690	
DE Mark	0.5468	-	0.3264	0.8191	63.34	0.7558	973.33	1.1264	3.3713
GB Sterling	1.6736	1.0625	-	2.5070	193.90	2.3139	279.97	3.4471	10.3178
CH Franc	0.6669	1.2189	0.3981	-	77.28	0.9225	1187.97	137.88	4.1083
JP Yen	0.0086	1.5776	0.5154	1.2934	-	1.1929	15.35	177.62	5.3178
CA Dollar	0.7233	1.3239	0.4321	1.0821	1.19	-	1287.73	1.4805	4.4620
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0260	0.3352	0.0841	1539.41	0.7758	-	11.55	3.4585
NL Guilder	0.4854	83.73	0.2859	72.79	56.19	0.6711	863.38	-	2.9910
FR Franc	0.1621	0.2965	0.0968	24.2866	18.76	0.2242	33.38	33.3800	-

Currency	USD	JOD	SAR	BAH	QAT	KUW	AED	ZBP	EGP
US Dollar	-	0.7080	3.7506	0.3770	3.6400	0.3037	3.6728	1.6400	3.3925
Jordan Dinar	1.4124	-	5.2975	0.5325	5.1412	0.4289	5.1876	2175.14	4.7917
Saudi Riyal	0.2666	0.1888	-	0.1005	0.97	0.0810	0.98	410.60	0.9045
Bahrain Dinar	2.65	1.8780	9.9488	-	9.66	8.0555	8.74	4084.99	8.9989
Qatar Dinar	0.2747	0.1945	1.0304	1.0304	-	0.0834	1.01	423.08	0.9320
Kuwait Dinar	3.2933	2.3116	12.3517	1.2415	11.99	-	12.10	5071.63	0.9320
Emirates Dinar	0.2723	0.1928	1.0212	1.026	0.9911	0.0827	-	419.30	0.9237
Lebanese 1000	0.85	0.4597	2.4355	0.2448	2.3636	0.1972	2.3849	-	2.2029
Egyptian	0.2948	0.2087	1.1056	0.1111	1.0730	0.0895	1.0826	453.94	-

Energy	Oil	revenue
Brent	19.13	19.16
W. Texa	19.67	19.80
Bonny	19.13	19.16
Dubai	17.20	17.30
UL Gas	192.00	188.00

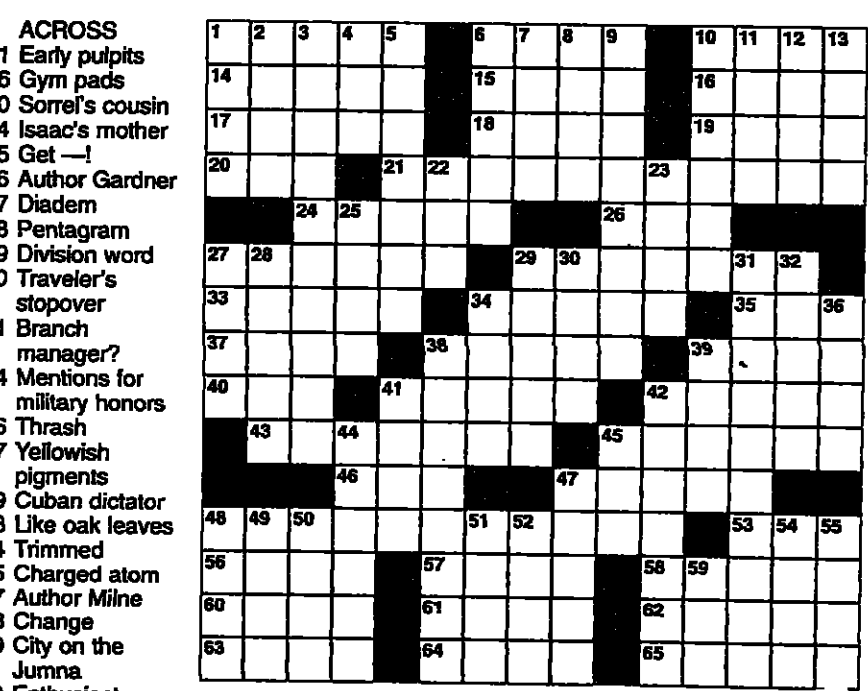
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
SA Riyal	0.2666	0.4878	0.15935	0.39894	30.9014
AE Dirham	0.2723	0.49808	0.16273	0.40641	31.5567
KW Dinar	3.2933	6.0241	1.96812	4.94071	381.679
BH Dinar	0.3770	4.85201	1.58529	3.97931	307.409
CY Pound	1.8646	3.4089	1.1133	2.7827	216.002

Bourse	Index	Value	Chng	% Chng	High	Low	Pr Cls
New York	DOW JONES	8003.81	-84.55	-1.05	8099.04	7999.4	8088.36
New York	S&P 500	928.43	-8.13	-0.87	937.63	928.91	936.56
London	FT-SE 100	4882.9	-11.8	-0.24	4897.7	4855.4	4874.5
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	20286.23	155.72	0.77	20290.2	20164.3	20130.5
Paris	CAC 40	2973.53	-30	-1	3024.67	2968.13	3003.53
Frankfurt	DAX	4335.74	-70.35	-1.6	4411.84	4331.91	4406.09

Commodity	Last	Delivery
Coffee (c/lbs)	194.75	Spot
Cocoa (\$/ton)	1520	Spot
Sugar (\$/ton)	341.5	Spot
Wheat (\$/ton)	141.5	Spot
Soya (c/lbs)	21.51	Spot
Tea (stg/kg)	137	Spot
Barley (\$/bsh)	0	Spot
Rice (\$/ton)	480	Spot

JOD Cross Rates	Buy	Sell
US Dollar	0.708	0.710
GB Sterling	1.1855	1.1914
DE Mark	0.3864	0.3883
CH Franc	0.4756	0.478
FR Franc	0.1146	0.1152
JP Yen	0.6113	0.6144
NL Guilder	0.3431	0.3448
IT Lira	0.3974	0.3994

THE Daily Crossword



by C.F. Murray

ARAB	ABBA	SITAR
LUKE	CURL	ADOBE
OMIT	CRIB	TILED
NOT	CURE	TROLLS
GRAPES	OF	WRAITH
ORE	REP	OSS
HORSE	EVEN	RULE
ARAI	SIN	IN
RAPT	RAPS	INERT
ELI	KAT	NNE
DANDELION	WINE	
COFFEE	EDDY	TON
ANITA	HEAD	BOARD
MIRE	ACHE	ELSE
STERS	SHOD	DYED

DOWN	1 Italian wine city	2 Chief	3 ATM, perhaps?	4 Row	5 Demolish	6 Hebrew prophet	7 Initial chip
8 Spanish aunts	9 Leader of the marching band	10 Rules	11 Caen's river	12 Choir voice	13 Night light	22 Court matter	23 John Brown affair
25 Kerman's land	27 Saint of Norway	28 Soft drinks	29 Moderated	30 War god	31 Brilliant young golfer	32 Blood vessel	34 Ballet movement
36 Post Ogden	38 Showing	39 Imaginative skill	40 Mystic air	41 Gaelic	42 Prop	44 Elliot's land	45 Noah's son
47 Public sentiment	48 Renown	49 Nuncupative	50 A Coolidge	51 Piece of gossip	52 Make deceptively attractive	54 Dill, old style	55 Conservative
59 Inlet							

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR SUNDAY AUGUST 3, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson
Astrologer, Carroll
Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) You should not get involved in a risky financial venture today, or you are sure to lose a bundle. If a friend is not able to do a favour for you, don't get angry, or you could make the situation worst for the days ahead.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) If you try to force your ideas on others today, they will only become more obstinate. This should be a good evening for socialising with close friends, so be the perfect host and make them feel welcome.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Avoid any disagreements, which could upset the plans you have made for today. A contact you make could be very valuable in the days ahead, so pursue this individual and discuss whatever ideas you have for being successful.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) You should not allow a pushy acquaintance to interrupt your routine, or there could be a difficult situation developing. Retire early this evening, and get plenty of rest so that you can handle any difficult situation is thrown to you.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) You may encounter some minor setbacks this morning, however these are easily overcome. Be more willing to go along with the ideas of your fellow associates, since they could have some good suggestions to present.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) You should not get involved in a get-rich-quick scheme today, or you will only lose money and get in trouble. Avoid strangers later this evening, who could damage your good reputation which you have spent much time to develop.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) You should not let a greedy person draw you into a discussion which will bring you great difficulty. Enjoy a fine social affair with your mate this evening by going out on the town to a romantic location.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) A new acquaintance could cause considerable great fear or shock to your loved ones today, so avoid this person if you possibly can. Make any needed property repairs, thereby you can make your home more comfortable for guests.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Postpone any dull duties which are not immediately important today, and enjoy some recreational activities with close friends. Be sure to drive with great care while on the highway, thereby avoiding any great difficulties.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) Set up a better budget today, and be sure you don't spend too much for pleasure, or you could find yourself short of funds. If you have the time later this evening, catch up on your correspondence which has been delayed.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) Get an early start today, and take care of the errands you have been putting off for quite a while. Listen carefully to your mate's opinions since you could discover in his or her discussions which could be quite beneficial.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) Instead of running around aimlessly today, decide early on some constructive pursuits. You should not take any crazy risks while driving on the highway or you could become developed in a difficult situation.

Birthstone of August: Peridot — Golden Quartz

Business

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Business

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Shipping & Packaging

Banking Corporation

posts JD2.12m net pr

BETTER HALF

By G

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GAME

THAT SCRAMBLE

By Henry Arnold

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Air travel demand in Asia-Pacific tipped to grow 7.4 per cent a year

SINGAPORE (AFP) — Demand for air travel in the Asia-Pacific region is to grow by an annual 7.4 per cent in the years to 2010, twice as high as the growth in the rest of the world, an industry body predicted.

The Air Transport Action Group (ATAG) forecast there will be 1.1 billion passengers travelling to, from and within the Asia-Pacific by 2010.

"This is almost equivalent to the worldwide passenger traffic total for 1995," ATAG, an independent coalition of organisations from throughout the air transport industry, said in its 1997 annual report. The

forecast growth in Asia-Pacific passenger traffic will be twice as high as the 3.4 per cent growth in the rest of the world, including the large and mature U.S. domestic market and the intra-European market, it said.

Rapid economic expansion, intensification of intra-regional trade, air transport liberalisation and the opening of new airports in places such as Macau, Osaka, Hong Kong and Kuala Lumpur would contribute to the growth.

The Geneva-based ATAG also said Asians' propensity to travel will increase as their disposable income rises, adding that the region's share of worldwide scheduled passenger traffic would increase from 29.9 per cent in 1995 to 42.9 per cent by 2010.

China and Vietnam were forecast to achieve the highest rates of growth in traffic between 1995 and 2010.

Vietnam's traffic was predicted to grow from 3.6 million to 28.4 million, a 689 per cent increase.

China's total traffic would increase by 373 per cent from 61.6 million to 291.5 million, overtaking Japan as the dominant travel market in the region.

China's share of total Asia-Pacific air traffic would increase to 26 per cent by 2010 from 16 per cent in 1995, while Japan's would fall to 20.1 per cent from 30.8 per cent during the same period, ATAG said.

Among South East Asian countries, Indonesia would record the highest average annual growth of 8.2 per cent, rising from 15.7 million passengers to 51.4 million, ATAG said.

It predicted that air traffic within the region would increase from 87 million passengers in 1995 to 267 million by 2010, while Europe would remain the most important world region for air travel to and from the Asia-Pacific.

ATAG said the ability of airlines to respond to the increase in demand by raising load factors, seat densities and aircraft size would be limited.

It said airlines should strike a balance between reducing the unit cost per seat through use of large

aircraft to provide competitive fares and increasing frequencies to provide a choice of departures and stimulate demand.

"Although larger-capacity aircraft have lower costs per seat, airline strategies have been to accommodate growth through more frequencies rather than larger aircraft," it said. "Increasing frequencies has stimulated demand to a larger extent than increasing the aircraft size."

"To cope with the growth in travel demand, the growth in airline capacity will therefore have to come essentially from an increase in the number of flights," the industry body said.

MEES: Conoco risks losing Syrian contract due to U.S. Congress

NICOSIA (AFP) — U.S. oil giant Conoco could lose a \$350 million contract to develop gas in Syria because of proposed laws in the American Congress to ban financial dealings with Damascus, a report has said.

The Middle East Economic Survey (MEES), citing industry sources, said a letter of intent had been signed with Conoco but Syria was reviewing its options and will probably look to Anglo Dutch Shell because of the proposed U.S. sanctions.

The \$350 million project is aimed developing gas reserves in Syria's Dair Al Zur field, MEES said, but added that the letter of intent with Conoco, awarded last month, is neither final nor binding.

"It is very possible that Syria may award the contract to a competing non-U.S. firm in view of the momentum of prevailing Congress-driven pressure in Washington to tighten U.S. economic and financial sanctions against Syria," MEES said.

Syria has condemned bills passed by both chambers of the U.S. Congress to ban financial dealings between U.S. companies and Syria, which is on a U.S. list of terrorist states.

The two bills, which would expand the U.S. economic embargo against Syria and a number of other countries, have gone to be finalised in a joint committee of the U.S. Senate and House of Representatives.

The final version cannot become law unless U.S. President Bill Clinton signs it, and he has publicly opposed the measures.

UAE mulls allowing more foreign banks to operate

ABU DHABI (R) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) is considering allowing more foreign banks to operate in the country after a 17-year freeze on new licences, the central bank governor said on Sunday.

"The UAE central bank is studying reopening the doors to licensing foreign banks," Sultan Nasser Al Suwaidi told reporters on the sidelines of a meeting of Arab finance ministers and central bankers.

He said the bank had stopped issuing licences to foreign banks in 1980, but changes on the international scene "have dictated a review and reopening the doors to meet the requirements of the World Trade Organisation."

"Circumstances that had governed the decision to

China eyes lion's share of global shipbuilding market

BEIJING (AFP) — China's shipyards are set to expand their five-per cent share of the world shipbuilding market and dominate within 15 to 25 years, the official China daily Business Weekly has said.

The country currently ranks third behind Japan and South Korea, but its cost advantages will prevail in the coming years as it closes gaps in technology and quality of management, said Yang Ye, an official at the flagship China State Shipbuilding Corp. (CSSC).

Chinese labour costs are only one-twentieth of those in Japan, he said.

International demand for new ships will also peak at 35 million to 45 million tonnes (DWTs) during the next 15 years, spurring expansion of the Chinese industry, he said.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

1996 was the worst year for Jordan Printing & Packaging Company

LAST YEAR was the worst in the history of the Jordan Printing and Packaging Company (JPPC) as it posted a JD65,000 net profit compared to JD200,000 in 1995. Board Chairman Kamal Asfour told the general assembly that he regrets the unsatisfactory results in 1996 especially after the company's shares have quintupled since it was established in 1972 and after having distributed dividends at rates ranging between eight and 20 per cent in previous years.

Mr. Asfour said that the board's reports since 1991 have warned of the conditions in the market of convertible industrial printing. "The market has been flooded with new equipment and printing companies since 1991," Mr. Asfour indicated noting that the printing firms which were operating before that time were enough to meet the needs of the local market and provide equal volume for exports.

He said that some neighbouring countries have set up convertible industrial printing presses with large capital and high qualifications and added that they are in competition with the company at present. With severe recession in the market, all these factors had a negative effect on the JPPC's sales.

The company's annual report showed an overall reduction in sales with the largest decline being in the "graphic" printing section. This drop represented 38 per cent of the total fall. The company recouped some of the decline by increasing the sales from the offset section by 48 per cent.

Mr. Asfour said the company was keen to control all expenditures as there has been a noticeable drop in industrial spending and wages as well as administrative expenses at rates exceeding the drop in earnings. He said the board recommended to the general assembly not to raise investments until "bright signals appear in the convertible printing industry in Jordan" (Al Aswag + Al Dastour).

Arab Banking Corporation (Jordan) posts JD2.12m net profit

THE ARAB Banking Corporation (Jordan) posted a JD2.12 million net profit at the end of last year and by adding retained earnings from previous years, the total amount available for distribution rose to JD4.04 million. Of this amount JD211,700 were transferred to legal reserves, JD422,900 to voluntary reserves and JD3.3 million to retained earnings to finance a JD10 million increase in capital to JD20 million before the end of this year.

The increase in capital will be achieved through distributing free shares to the shareholders and floating shares for their private subscription.

The bank's total assets increased from JD171 million at the end of 1995 to JD177 million at the end of 1996. Total liabilities went up from JD155 million to JD159 million and shareholders' equity from JD15.9 million to JD17.9 million (Al Rai).

JORDAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - JORDAN											
TELEPHONE: 6217172-17173											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 02/08/1997											
PAGE	12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW				TRANS.	SHARES	JD	PRICE	PRICE		
298,000	214,500	ARAB BANK	13.5	1.36	7	322	64870	296.00	294.00	-2.00	
1,240	1,080	JOR. NATIONAL BK.	8	0.00	58	34529	70730	2.25	2.25	-	
5,800	4,100	CAIRO AMMAN BANK	11.3	2.75	1	222	10920	5.70	5.45	-0.25	
2,480	2,150	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	8.1	2.64	9	247	5034	2.20	2.20	-	
5,200	4,400	THE HOUSING BK.	14.5	4.00	1	522	2425	4.55	4.65	+0.10	
4,180	2,440	JOR. SWAIT BANK	10.8	0.00	8	222	6596	3.20	3.25	+0.05	
1,090	1,740	JON-GULF BANK	4.7	8.86	8	692	1495	2.70	2.70	-	
4,050	3,480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	16.0	3.05	16	382	15037	3.94	3.94	-	
3,800	3,000	JOR. INV. FIN. BANK	21.5	0.00	1	150	503	3.38	3.25	-0.13	
BANK SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 217.05 %CHG: -0.56											
2,470	2,150	GENERAL ARAB INSUR.	13.2	7.58	2	375	85	2.25	2.22	-0.03	
4,950	3,800	JERUSALEM INSUR.	10.6	5.13	1	100	390	4.00	3.90	-0.10	
2,260	1,590	JOR. FRENCH INSUR.	4.5	12.42	4	1752	2818	2.62	2.62	-	
INSURANCE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 113.55 %CHG: -0.27											
1,620	1,500	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	8.0	6.02	13	4876	8053	1.68	1.66	-0.02	
6,100	4,100	ARAB INTL. HOTELS	15.4	4.00	1	100000	1500000	5.00	5.00	-	
1,550	930	NATL. PORTFOLIO	14.5	4.81	42	15102	26413	1.64	1.64	-	
830	480	JORDAN INTL. TRAD.	26.7	0.00	4	2900	1508	5.51	5.52	+0.01	
8,630	6,850	ALALA	12.4	7.25	1	200	1380	6.85	6.85	-	
3,720	2,890	ARAB INTL. INV. EDUC.	12.4	0.00	2	250	740	2.95	2.95	-	
1,220	930	SARKA EDUCATION	9	0.00	1	200	475	2.95	2.95	-	
2,230	1,630	UNIFIED CO.	8.2	6.40	8	1691	2926	1.72	1.72	-	
1,010	540	UNION LAND DEV.	9	0.00	1	500	320	0.64	0.64	-	
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 108.61 %CHG: -0.09											
4,450	3,100	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	26.7	2.77	16	14186	56311	3.99	3.97	-0.02	
4,140	2,710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	11.0	2.53	4	20127	86043	2.95	2.95	-	
7,050	4,850	JOR. PETROL. CO.	14.9	1.13	4	884	5640	6.35	6.40	+0.05	
10,250	9,040	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	9.7	8.89	22	3084	30887	10.00	10.00	-	
7,200	5,300	JORDAN TANKING	6.3	0.00	2	300	1559	5.00	5.00	-	
2,470	1,050	MOULDER INDUSTRIES	10.1	8.55	1	1500	1755	1.19	1.17	-0.02	
3,260	1,650	INDUSTRIAL COMM. GR.	9	0.00	4	464	774	1.66	1.67	+0.01	
4,100	1,100	JOR. ALUM. IND.	14.5	4.81	19	19988	82130	4.08	4.18	+0.08	
7,250	5,870	JOR. CEMENT IND.	6.3	3.28	2	1400	8420	6.00	6.10	+0.10	
2,570	2,050	JORDAN DAIRY	8.4	7.25	67	164	246	2.48	2.48	-	
1,800	1,310	JOR. PAPER INDUST.	16.4	9.06	2	250	962	1.31	1.32	+0.01	
5,650	4,300	DAR ALDAMA DR. INV.	13.0	4.72	3	427	2262	5.30	5.30	-	
3,850	2,400	ARAB ALUM. IND.	5.7	10.33	3	464	1131	2.45	2.42	-0.03	
960	480	LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9.7	0.00	4	4500	2070	0.46	0.46	-	
1,330	1,000	ARAB PAPER CONV. TRD.	31.5	0.00	4	1000	1033	1.04	1.03	-0.01	
770	510	NATIONAL INDS.	8	0.00	7	9650	5043	5.52	5.52	-	
1,290	510	INVESTMENT SERV. CHN.	9	0.00	27	9350	5311	5.56	5.56	-	
990	530	JOR. NOCROM. INDS.	9	0.00	16	9300	6049	6.63	6.66	+0.03	
940	530	JOR. SULPHO-CHN.	9	0.00	40	27200	17000	6.62	6.60	-0.02	
1,670	1,120	ARAB PHARM. CHN.	14.9	9.06	18	7142	9509	1.32	1.32	-	
2,020	1,080	UNIV. MOON. INDS.	14.1	9.52	22	13400	15575	1.13	1.15	+0.02	
1,510	990	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	14.1	9.52	22	5100	5343	1.05	1.05	-	
1,620	1,300	NATL. MILIT. IND.	14.5	6.55	30	9216	14522	1.62	1.54	-0.08	
1,070	810	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	15.4	0.00	22	9000	7615	1.84	1.84	-	
2,090	1,340	EL-ZAY READY WEAR	48.2	0.00	6	2562	3098	1.36	1.37	+0.01	
1,130	1,060	INTL. TOBACCO	6.2	0.00	2	600	452	1.13	1.13	-	
1,250	860	UNION CH. & VEG.	41.4	0.00	1	250	228	0.91	0.91	-	
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS INDEX: 124.24 %CHG: +0.26											
373	373					171020	354802				
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 164.50 %CHG: -0.22											
561	561					553244	2082742				
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR SATURDAY 02/08/1997											
PAGE	12 MONTHS	COMPANY'S NAME	P/E	DIV.	NO. OF	NO. OF	VALUE	OPEN	CLOSE	CHANGE	
HIGH	LOW				TRANS.	SHARES	JD	PRICE	PRICE		
640	350	CENTRAL GEN. STORAGE	9	0.00	1	300	108	0.36	0.36	-	
660	410	JOR. TRADE FAC.	11.7	0.00	15	27700	12128	1.22	1.44	+0.22	
1,550	1,070	SARKA FOR INVESTMENT	75.4	0.00	12	2000	2308	1.92	1.92	-	
980	540	JOR. FIN. INV. CO.	9	0.00	12	16749	10246	0.81	0.82	+0.01	
840	640	UNION INV. SOI	9	0.00	12	2280	450	0.69	0.70	+0.01	
620	370	ARAB PHARM. CHN.	14.5	6.55	30	9216	14522	1.62	1.54	-0.08	
950	720	AL-SHARQ INV.	9	0.00	4	13000	11180	0.85	0.84	-0.01	
950	610	AL-DAMLIYAH 751	62.4	0.00	2	6300	2600	0.65	0.65	-	
880	480	ARAB INTL. INV. TRD.	46.1	0.00	5	2700	1200	0.40	0.40	-	
720	420	NATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	71	138700	73000	0.53	0.53	-	
710	420	NATL. MILIT. IND.	14.5	6.55	30	9216	14522	1.62	1.54	-0.08	
640	410	KAYZAR DIES & MANIFS	9	0.00	1	250	113	0.43	0.45	+0.02	
580	420	JORDAN STEEL	32.5	6.78	8	3125	1582	0.50	0.50	-	
730	580	MIDSTATE PHARM. 751	8	0.00	2	7200	720	0.61	0.61	-	
570	450	NATL. POLYMER	8	0.00	26	37450	16887	0.45	0.45	-	
600	320	INDS. INC.	19.7	0.00	6	6250	2188	0.35	0.35	-	
860	730	INDS. CERAMIC	19.7	0.00	2	1050	550	0.75	0.75	-	
820	590	NATL. POLYMER	8	0.00	1	1210	2080	1.61	1.61	-	
1,000	730	NAT. ALUMINUM 751	8	0.00	21	25500	11160	0.77	0.76	-0.01	
1,020	730	N									
860	590	MID-EAST COMPLEX	8.0	15.38	30	567150	368678	0.65	0.65	-	
GRAND TOTAL INDEX: 164.50 %CHG: -0.22											
561	561					553244	2082742				

Heartbreak strikes World Championship's opening day

ATHENS (AFP) — Heartbreak struck on the opening day of the World Championships here on Saturday when Britain's best gold medal hope Kelly Holmes broke down in the opening 1,500 metre heat and Russia's former world triple jump record holder Anna Biryukova had to be stretchered off in agony.

It was a bitter blow for Holmes who was helped off the track when she pulled up on the final bend with a damaged Achilles tendon.

"I just feel somebody's put a curse on me, and I want them to take it off," said the 27-year-old Holmes, who had planned to attempt an 800m and 1,500m double.

Instead the army sergeant is out of the championships, her dream ruined.

For the 29-year-old Biryukova, her future has been put in doubt for the second time in her career after she let out a howl of pain as she collapsed in a heap with a ruptured tendon.

A previous injury had forced the Russian to retire

in 1991 but two years later she returned and won the 1993 World Championship.

The championship's first major upset saw world shot putt record holder Randy Barnes storming out of the stadium after failing to qualify for Saturday night's final.

The defending champion could only manage a throw of 19.51m, which left him in sixth place and out of the competition.

Barnes's qualifying group was won by his arch-rival John Godina who, but for the wild card rule introduced by the International Amateur Athletics Federation (IAAF), would not have been here.

Godina, who looked set to win in Atlanta until Barnes won on his last throw, failed to make the American team in the trials in Indianapolis, finishing fourth.

But when the IAAF decided defending champions did not have to qualify the Americans immediately put Godina in the shot team, allowing him to try for a shot and discus double.

Godina won his qualifying

group with a putt of 21.10m and will go for the gold in Saturday night's final.

Olympic champion Svetlana Masterkova found herself in a race against time to be fit for Sunday's 1,500 meter semi-final after limping away from her first round run.

"I don't know if I can run 30 yards or 1,500 metres," said the 29-year-old afterwards.

"I am all messed up in my head, I just don't feel right," added the Russian who ran 4:10.22 to finish fourth in her heat.

Defending sprint champion Donovan Bailey attempt to retain his title got off to a shaky start in the hot Athens sun.

The Canadian was slow out of the blocks but picked up enough pace to snatch second place.

But arch-rival Ato Boldon accused the 29-year-old of playing mind games.

Boldon, who ran an impressive 10.10 in his heat, said that he didn't take Bailey's performance seriously.

"I never regard the first round performances seriously. Donovan is a master of kidology and I await tonight's second round with interest," the Trinidadian said.

Boldon's American training partner Maurice Greene, who came through his heat in relaxed style, joked about Bailey's performance.

"Well there are some who run fast in the first round and some who run slow!" Greene said.

Frankie Fredericks, the dual silver medallist from Atlanta, eased through his heat as did Green's fellow Americans Tim Montgomery and veteran Mike Marsh.

In the women's battle both Merlene Ottey and the 21-year-old Marion Jones cruised through easily to the second round.

In the women's 400 meters, Australian Cathy Freeman, the fastest over the distance this year, could only manage second in her first round qualifier.

"I am not into my rhythm yet," she explained afterwards.



Canadian Donovan Bailey sprints down the track during his heat in the men's 100 metres at the World Athletics Championships. Bailey finished second in his heat to qualify for the second round (Reuters photo)



British runner Kelly Holmes grimaces as she walks off the track after pulling out of her heat in the women's 1500m race. Holmes, Britain's best hope for a gold medal, pulled out of the race with an injured left leg (Reuters photo)

Crack of dawn alarm calls leaving athletes groggy

ATHENS (AFP) — Crack of dawn alarm calls are playing havoc with the performances of some of the world's best athletes at the World Championships here.

With events starting at eight o'clock in the morning to avoid the blistering midday heat that turns the Olympic stadium into a furnace, athletes are having to get up at six o'clock or earlier.

And for many of them, it is posing serious problems.

Defending 100m champion and world record holder Donovan Bailey was slow out of the blocks and found himself trailing home behind Greece's Agelos Paviakakis in 10.17secs.

"I'm not a morning person," the 29-year-old revealed before the race.

Veteran sprint queen Merlene Ottey is another who is unhappy about the schedule.

"I'm not used to getting up that early in the morning," complained the 37-year-old who is attempting to add the 100m title to the two 200m World Championship titles she has won.

Australia's Cathy Freeman, favourite to win the 400 meters, could only manage second in her first round race.

The 1994 Commonwealth Games champion blamed the early alarm call for her poor showing.

"I was up at 5.30 and it knocks you back. It is difficult to get into your rhythm," said the 24-year-old.

Her arch-rival for the 400m gold here, America's Jean Miles-Clark, is also suffering.

"I'm not used to arriving at the track in darkness," said the 30-year-old, who like Freeman also finished second in her first round race.



Trinidadian Ato Boldon sprints down the track during his heat in the men's 100 metres at the World Athletics Championships August 2. Boldon won his heat to advance to the second round (Reuters photo)

Track and field returns to spiritual home

ATHENS (R) — Athletics returned to its spiritual home this weekend in the nation which founded the ancient and modern Olympics and hopes to stage the 2004 Games.

A record 200 nations, the most at any global competition in any sport, are attending the Sixth World Championships in the impressive Olympic stadium, named after Greek marathon runner Spyridon Louis who won gold at the first modern games in 1896.

Hippias, Aristotle and Scipio Africanus chronicled the deeds of the heroes at the ancient games, exalting the purity of competitive running, throwing and jumping.

Modern athletics features essentially the same disciplines which entranced spectators and scribes in Olympia.

It also forms the basis of the summer Olympic programme and a successful championships here is seen as essential if Greece are to win the right to stage the 2004 Games.

"This is the big one," said a senior government official. "The eyes of the world are on Athens for the championship one month before the International Olympic Committee (IOC) votes for the 2004 venue. Athens wants to prove it is the best candidate."

The IOC vote in Lausanne on September 5 for the host city from a short list of Rome, Athens, Stockholm, Cape Town and Buenos Aires.

Forty IOC members will be in town and no doubt enjoying the usual lavish hospitality.

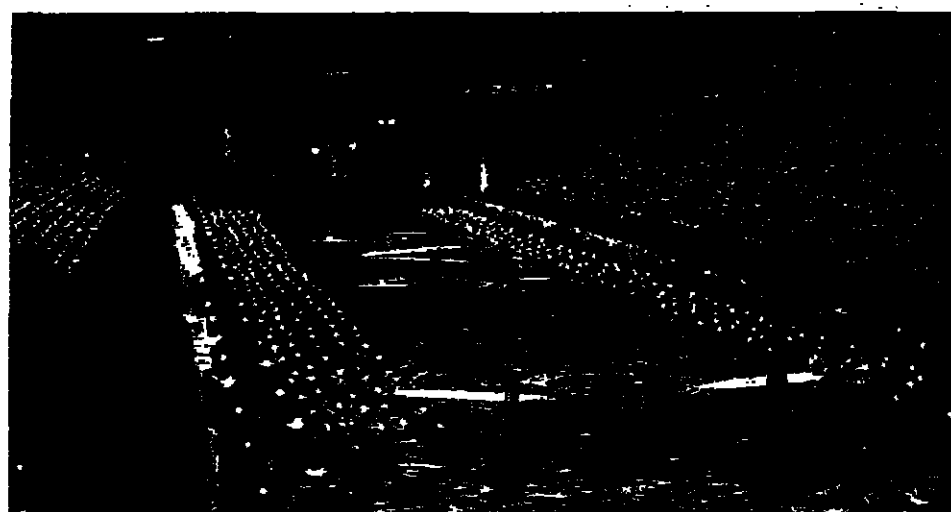
But after the organisational nightmares of last year's Atlanta Olympics, the key for the Athens bid organisers will be how efficiently the biggest sporting event of the year is run.

International Amateur Athletic Federation President Primo Nebiolo, a leading figure in the Rome Olympic bid, made all the right noises at a news conference on Thursday.

"As long as everything is perfect, I will be the happiest man in the world," Nebiolo said.

At least early concerns about the weather and air pollution have been partially allayed.

The weather is hot but not oppressive, with temperatures ranging from 22 to 33 degrees and low humidity while the pollution is evident in the city centre but less so in the suburb of Marousi where the Olympic stadium is located.



A light spectacular takes place in the Marble Stadium during the opening ceremonies of the 6th IAAF World Athletics Championships. The ancient stadium was rebuilt in 1896 for the first modern Olympic Games (Reuters photo)



Merlene Ottey of Jamaica starts in her first round heat in the women's 100 metres event at 6th IAAF World Athletics Championships. Ottey won her heat in a time of 11.27 seconds. Pictured on the left is Johanna Manninen of Finland (Reuters photo)

Terrorism fears prompt draconian security measures

ATHENS (R) — Concern over possible guerrilla action during the Sixth World Championships which opened Saturday has prompted Greek police to mount their biggest operation ever with 7,600 officers on guard and another 7,400 on standby.

"Any terrorist attack against athletes, official visitors or facilities will have a very negative effect for Greece and shatter our hopes to host the 2004 Olympics," a senior government official said.

The Public Order Ministry will spend about \$9 million, more than double the original budget (\$4 million), to guard the 80,000-seat Olympic stadium, the Athens airport, VIP guests, foreign embassies, and hotels throughout Athens where athletes and the media stay.

Officers have been recalled from summer leave or transferred to Athens from other parts of the country. Sniffer dogs search premises for explosives and video cameras were put in key points of the capital sending live pictures to police headquarters.

"I have never seen so much police in the streets of Athens for as long as I can remember," said Christos Karytsis, a 60-year-old taxi driver. "They've become paranoid with this event."

Athletes, officials and the media will be taken to and from the stadium in coaches with police escort, many roads will be cut off during the championships and nobody without a ticket or special accreditation will be allowed inside the stadium.

The August 2-10 championships is the largest sports event Greece has hosted since the first modern Olympic Games in 1896 and is seen as a major test for Athens' bid to host the 2004 Olympics.

It will feature 2,000 athletes from 200 countries, 3,000 media representatives and will be scrutinised by 40 visiting International Olympic Committee (IOC) members before the IOC's September 5 vote on the venue of the 2004 Games.

"We spared no cost in security to be make sure the Athens Championships will not be marred by unfortunate incidents like the ones in the Munich and Atlanta Olympics. We simply can't afford such bad publicity," the government official said.

"There has never been any terrorist incident in Greece during major sports or political events. This is a safe country and will stay that way."

Although Greece has one of the lowest crime rates according to risk assessment groups, it has a bad record in tackling terrorism with a number of local guerrilla groups eluding police for more than 20 years.

The dispatch said special security measures should be taken for the U.S., Israeli, Turkish, British, French, German, Russian, Italian, Algerian, Peruvian and Egyptian delegations.

TODAY AT

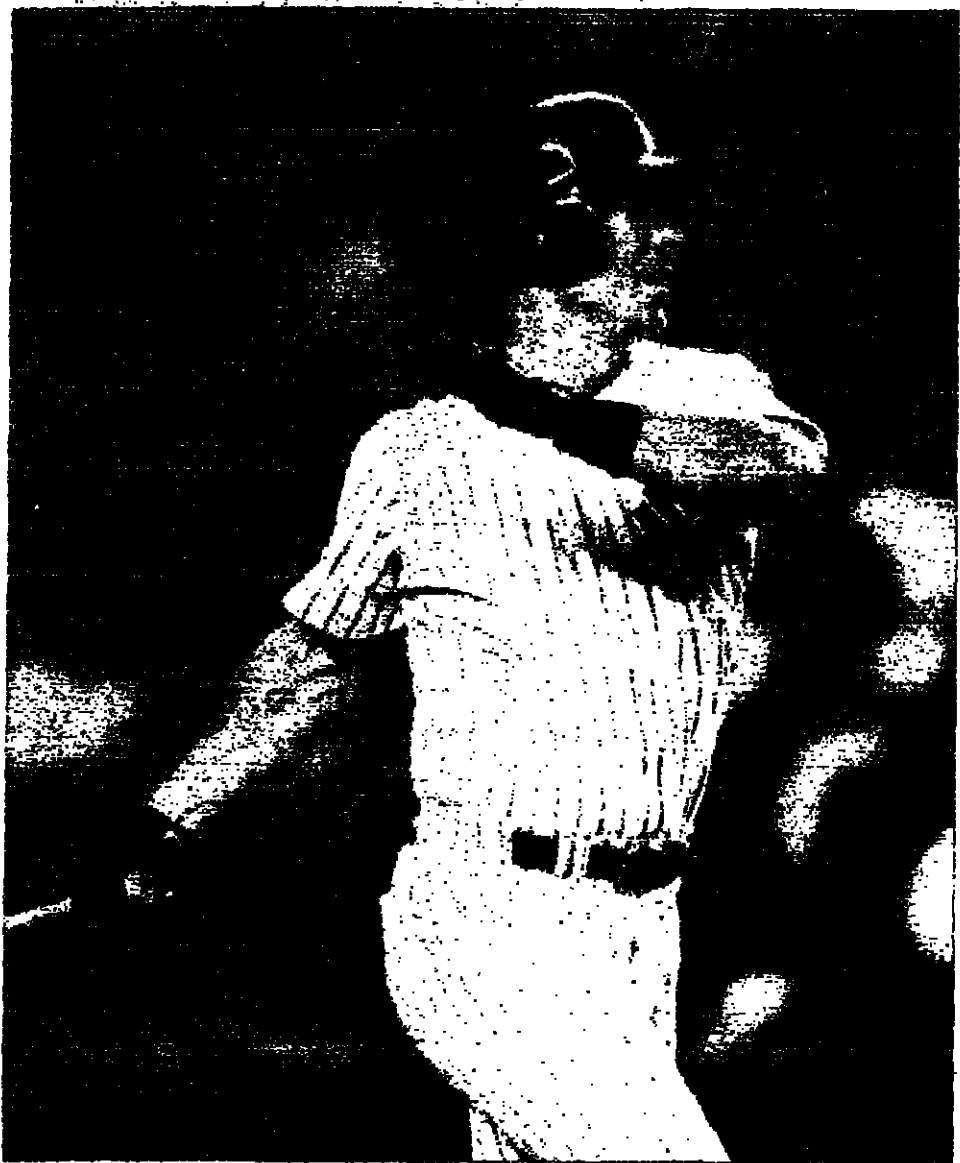
CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "1"
 Steven Spielberg's
THE LOST WORLD (JURASSIC PARK)
 Starring: Jeff Goldblum & Julian Moore
 Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "2"
 Jim Carrey ... in
LIAR LIAR
 Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:15, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLAZA
 John Travolta...in
PHENOMENON
 Shows: 12:30, 3:30, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:677420
CONCORD
 Kevin Costner ...in
TIN CUP (3:30, 8:30)
 Demi Moore... in
THE SCARLET LETTER
 (12:30, 6:15, 10:30)
 Shows: 9:30, 6:00

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AMN AI AI YA HO
 performance starts at 8:30 p.m.
 The theatre is closed every Friday.
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New York Yankees batter Tino Martinez follows through on his sacrifice fly against the Minnesota Twins in the fourth inning at New York's Yankee Stadium. The fly drove in a run from third base for his 100th RBI of the year as the Yankees won 8-3 (Reuters photo)

Top NBA coaches sign extended deals

HOUSTON (AFP) — Rudy Tomjanovich signed a four-year contract extension to remain coach of the National Basketball Association's Houston Rockets.

And reports in Atlanta said U.S. Olympic coach Lenny Wilkens is on the verge of making a similar deal with the NBA Hawks.

The Rockets restructured the contract of coach Rudy Tomjanovich, extending it through the 2001 campaign.

Tomjanovich just completed his 27th season with the Rockets, the sixth as coach. He owns a 281-159 regular-season record and 48-33 playoff mark, including NBA championships in 1994 and 1995.

"Winning is what the Rockets aim for every year," Rockets owner Leslie Alexander said. "We're very fortunate in Houston that we have a team and a coach who can achieve the success that the Rockets want for our fans in this city."

"We are really looking forward to this season with very high hopes, notwithstanding Michael (Jordan). We can beat the Bulls."

After acquiring All-Star forward Charles Barkley in a trade with Phoenix last summer, Houston went 57-25 in 1996-97 before losing to Utah in the Western Conference finals.

The Hawks would not confirm reports they have extended Wilkens' deal for four years. The 59-year-old Wilkens is the winningest coach in NBA history and has a record of 1,070-876 in 24 seasons with Seattle, Portland, Cleveland and Atlanta.

The Hawks advanced to the second round of the playoffs last season before losing to the eventual NBA champion Bulls.

Hingis and Pierce set up Australian Open repeat

SAN DIEGO, California (AFP) — Martina Hingis beat two opponents to reach the semifinals of the WTA Tour women's tennis tournament here on Friday, a stubborn Conchita Martinez, and herself.

She took 102 minutes to sew up a 6-4, 6-4 victory over the seventh seeded Spaniard, and needed eight match points. The usually can't miss Swiss also made 32 unforced errors in what was far from a convincing performance.

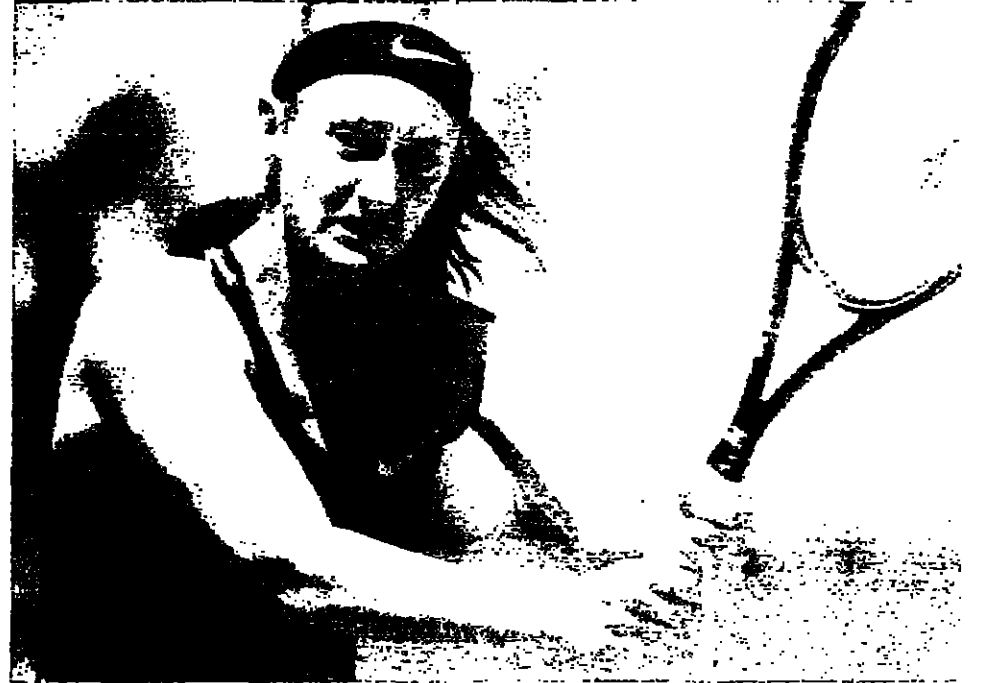
"I can't remember making so many unforced errors," said Hingis, who also claimed just four of 16 break point opportunities. "It was one of my hardest matches this year, and you didn't know what was going to happen until the end of the match."

Hingis, with the confidence gained from notching up 51 victories in 52 matches this year, thought it was over at 5-2 in the second.

It was not, Martinez, who took just two games from her in last weekend's Stanford final, has been working with a fitness coach recently, and it showed.

She moved well, chased everything, and was like a terrier refusing to give up a favourite toy. She wouldn't let go, and Hingis was sweating and beating the net and kicking balls into the stands in frustration.

"She was fighting very



Mary Pierce

hard. I thought she would make some mistakes but it wasn't that way. I knew the match would be different to last week, but not that hard," said Hingis, referring to how tired Martinez had been in Stanford because of playing a doubles match until after twelve on the night before their final.

Hingis will next play Mary Pierce, in a repeat of this year's Australian Open final. Pierce, seeded sixth, outplayed compatriot Sandrine Testud of France 6-3, 6-2.

Pierce made a blistering

start. Light on her feet and heavy with her forehand she sped to a 3-0 lead, which would have become 4-0 had she not conceded a game point awarded in her favour.

Having taken the first set with a break in the second game, Pierce then won 12 of 13 points from 2-2 in the second set to build an intimidating 5-2 lead.

"There was nothing I could do. She was able to hit winners from anywhere. She served well too and I couldn't make my returns," Testud said.

Pierce goes into her

match with Hingis secure in the knowledge that she is in form and has a 3-1 lead in their career meetings.

"I'm excited to play her again. She's very tough to beat but I'm looking forward to playing her again," said Pierce. "I'm really happy with the way I played against Sandrine and I executed my shots the way I wanted to. Overall, I'm pretty happy with everything."

The second semifinal pits number two seed Monica Seles of the United States against third seeded Annika Coetzee of South Africa.

MAJOR LEAGUE RESULTS

National League

Los Angeles	13	Chicago Cubs	9
Florida	3	Atlanta	2
San Francisco	8	Cincinnati	7
San Diego	8	Montreal	2
Philadelphia	4	St. Louis	1
Colorado	7	Pittsburgh	6
NY Mets	8	Houston	5

American League

Toronto	7	Detroit	5
NY Yankees	8	Minnesota	3
Boston	10	Kansas City	3
Milwaukee	8	Seattle	3
Cleveland	8	Texas	5
Anaheim	9	Chi White Sox	1
Oakland	2	Baltimore	1

McRae leads New Zealand Rally

AUCKLAND. New Zealand (R) — Briton Colin McRae finished Saturday's opening spectator stage of the New Zealand Rally with a two-second lead over Subaru team mate Kenneth Eriksson of Sweden.

Defending champion and current leader Tommi Makinen, in a Mitsubishi, and fellow Finn Juha Kankkunen, in a Ford, were also only two seconds off the pace after the first super-special stage on the opening leg at Manukau, near Auckland.

McRae, who won the New Zealand event three years in succession from 1993, adapted best to the slippery conditions which were made worse for the favourites by the 83-car

field tackling the course in reverse order.

The Subaru driver lies second in the World Championship, 10 points behind Makinen, and needs to win this round — the ninth of 14 — to have a realistic chance of taking the title.

Briton Richard Burns was fifth fastest, three seconds behind McRae, with Spaniard Carlos Sainz a further second behind after recovering from sliding off the road at the first corner.

The rally resumes on Sunday with nine stages to the north of Auckland, the first a demanding 32-km contest along gravel forest roads.

Moya in final

AMSTERDAM (AFP) — Top-seeded Spaniard Carlos Moya scored a straight sets victory over fourth-seeded Swede Magnus Norman on Saturday to advance to the final of the \$500,000 Amsterdam ATP Tour clay-court tournament.

Moya, ranked 10th in the world and a finalist at the Australian Open in January, beat 29th-ranked Norman 6-4, 6-3.

He will face unseeded Czech player Slava Dosedel in the final after recovering from sliding off the road at the first corner.

The rally resumes on Sunday with nine stages to the north of Auckland, the first a demanding 32-km contest along gravel forest roads.

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GOREN BRIDGE

WITH OSEAR SHARIF & TAMMAM HIRSH

FORCE MAJEUR

Both vulnerable, West deals

NORTH ♠ Q 9 7 2

♦ K J 10 7 5

♥ 7 6 4

WEST ♠ 10 5

♦ A Q 8 6

♥ 4 2

♣ A K J 3 2

SOUTH ♠ A 10 8 3

♦ K J 10 9 7 3

♥ 3

♣ 10 5

The bidding: WEST NORTH EAST SOUTH

1♣ Pass 1NT Pass

2♣ Pass 2♥ Pass

3♥ Pass 3♠ Pass

Opening lead: King of ♠

Many bridge hands revolve

around the battle for control. Study

the diagram, then decide whether

South should make two hearts dou-

bled or go down to defeat.

We are not enamored of East's

decision to respond one no trump

rather than one diamond. It is a

tactical action to shut the enemy

out of the major suits, but all too

often it succeeds in preempting partner, who has already shown values by opening the auction.

West led the king and ace of clubs, then continued with a third round to East's queen. Declarer elected to discard a diamond rather than ruff. East shifted to a spade, taken in dummy, and a trump to the nine lost to the queen. The club continuation was ruffed by declarer and the king of hearts forced the ace.

Declarer ruffed the next club, drew the outstanding trumps and cashed out the spades. In all, declarer scored four trump tricks and four spades to score up two hearts doubled. A normal result?

Not quite. Declarer was reluctant to ruff a club for fear of being shorted. Rather than return a neutral spade, East should continue the attack on declarer's trumps by leading the ace of diamonds. Now each time West regains the lead with a trump, declarer can be punched with a club. That will force declarer to remain with the long trump.

Declarer will end up collecting four heart tricks, two spades and the king of diamonds, for down one.

Can Chelsea repeat Charity Shield feat?

LONDON (R) — The sort of Chelsea fan who believes life begins at 50 and mid-life crises are for youngsters may have a sense of déjà vu at the Charity Shield on Sunday.

The rest, including all the players and manager Ruud Gullit, could be about to experience the totally unfamiliar in one of English soccer's classic north-south battles.

Winning at Wembley will not be a novelty — Chelsea did that in the F.A. Cup final last season. But capturing the traditional curtain-raiser to the League season would be a first for a generation or two of fans.

Chelsea have done it only once before, 42 years ago, and few lovers of "the blues" can remember that.

Sunday will therefore be a trip down memory lane, rather than the more familiar Kings Road, only for the older fan.

Chairman Ken Bates's schooldays were well behind him when Chelsea beat Newcastle 3-0 at Stamford Bridge in 1955 for the Shield, the year of the Londoners' only League title to date. But other members of the staff have a less distant recall.

"I've been here the longest and it certainly rules me out," said one female club official.

The only other occasion that Chelsea have qualified for the Shield — in 1970 when they lost 2-1 to League champions Everton — also seems lost in the thick mists of time.

It may be the start of August but the arrival of the Shield means the summer and its focus on cricket is effectively over for the nation's soccer lovers.

In one week the serious action starts with the Premier League back in full flow and both Chelsea and Manchester United high on the lists of likely champions.

In some ways this year's Shield pits the traditional powers of the game against the parvenus — at least in money and merchandising terms if not pure soccer ones.

Chelsea have opened a new megastore and have

invested heavily on the sort of foreign players who would never have graced the club of 10 years ago, let alone 40, in a genuine championship challenge to take on the traditional big spenders.

United, the masters of marketing who long ago learned the importance of merchandise sales and bourse listings in funding the club's development, will be chasing their 14th Charity Shield triumph in 16 appearances since 1908.

Such has been their recent dominance that last season they arrived at Wembley as both league champions and cup winners and thrashed League runners-up Newcastle 4-0.

United started the season as they finished it, as champions, but this year they embark on the post-Cantona era after the

retirement of French striker Eric for a new career outside soccer.

England striker Teddy Sheringham, formerly of Chelsea's North London rivals Tottenham, fills the gap left by Eric. Cries of "ooh, ah, Sheringham" are not to be expected.

United manager Alex Ferguson has selection worries, with last season's leading scorer Ole Gunnar Solskjaer definitely out of action because of an injury that threatens to sideline him for the first month of the new season.

Ferguson's hopes of signing Brazilian defender Celso Silva were also dashed after he was refused a work permit.

Gary Pallister and Gary Neville are recovering from injuries but Jordi Cruyff, son of Johan, has been in impressive form.

Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co., Extension Announcement Tender No. 3/97 Fuel Oil And Naphtha Addition Storage Tanks Project



Jordan Petroleum Refinery Co. announces the extension of the A.M. tender according to the following dates:-

- Submission of pre-qualification documents not later than 12:00 hrs of 16.8.1997 at the company's head office.
- Eligible contractors to obtain tender documents from the company's head office against non-refundable JD200 per set. Not later than 12:30 hrs of 20.8.1997.
- Offers must be submitted at the company's head office not later than 12:00 hrs of Sunday 28.8.1997.

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Algerian rebels kill more than 80 villagers — press

PARIS (R) — Algerian Islamist rebels armed with swords and guns slaughtered more than 80 villagers in two attacks in hamlets south of Algiers, national newspapers said Saturday.

The latest massacres in the remote hamlets coincided with a flare-up of violence in Algiers with rebels ambushing police patrols and detonating a bomb outside a restaurant in the crowded city.

A newspaper also reported the security forces have killed 30 guerrillas in a raid against one of their strongholds to bring the number of rebels killed in the past month according to the press to more than 300.

Scores of rebels armed with guns and swords killed 38 villagers in Sidi Al Madani hamlet in Blida province, about 50 kilometres south of Algiers, overnight Thursday-Friday.

Al Watan and Al Khabar newspapers said.

Forty-three people were killed in a similar raid by Islamist guerrillas in Metmata village in Ain Defla province, 120 kilometres southwest of Algiers, overnight Tuesday-Wednesday, they said.

Among the dead were elderly men, women and children, the newspapers added. "[The assailants] raided Sidi Al Madani village and left corpses of women, children and elderly villagers lying in a pool of blood," Al Watan said.

The rebels wounded 12 other villagers as they were escaping the massacre, it added.

They decimated whole families in the raid, including children under six, Al Khabar said.

Between 40 and 60 rebels attacked Metmata village

overnight Tuesday-Wednesday killing 41 people by cutting their throats or shooting them by guns, Al Watan and Al Khabar said.

The guerrillas kidnapped four girls, two of them were found later dead with their throats slashed, they added.

Among the victims in Metmata were 11 children and seven women, two of them pregnant, Al Khabar said.

The newspaper named a man, Ahmad Menal, who lost 25 family members and relatives in the raid. The guerrillas shot him in the face and then cut his throat.

"Terrorist activities witnessed a worrying increase in the past weeks giving an impression of a return to square one of the first years of terrorism in Algeria," the influential Al Watan said.

Rape case sheds light on state of women in India

FIROZPUR NAMA, India. (AP) — Fifteen-year-old Baskar sat on a string cot inside her home, twisting the end of her veil round and round her finger, waiting for the fate of her life, and dignity, to be decided.

Outside, an open field was crowded with thousands of bearded old men, village elders who travelled from all parts of northern India to discuss the young woman and the allegations she has made.

Baskar was married in July to a stranger selected for her by her conservative Muslim family. As is tradition in India, the family provided a dowry, sending a refrigerator, furniture and other household goods. They could not, however, afford one item the groom had demanded — a motorcycle.

On her wedding night, Baskar says, her drunken new husband and his three friends beat her and took turns raping her. They forced her to crouch on all fours while they taunted her.

"They said, 'let's make her a motorcycle,'" Baskar says in an interview, her face half-hidden by her traditional Islamic veil.

The assault of Baskar, who gave only her first name, represents the social and cultural realities of women throughout India, according to women's rights activists.

More than 5,000 women are killed every year because their in-laws consider their dowries inadequate.

Only a tiny percentage of the killers are ever punished. Hundreds of thousands of cases in which women have been beaten and tortured over dowries await trial in courts across India.

"The position of women is so low that men consider them lower than the shoes they wear," Reena Bannerjee, a women's rights activist who

works with dowry-dispute and rape victims, said Friday. Baskar, beaten and fearful, returned to her parents' home after the rape. In fact, fear may be what is driving the young woman, who's never been to school or stayed far from her home, to seek justice.

A few days after the assault, her village council ruled that she should go back to her husband and let "bygones be bygones."

"I will die but I will not go back there," she said. "Even if they stop giving me bread and water."

Her family has registered a complaint with police. But the case will have to wait its turn: more than 200 dowry-related cases await trial in the local court.

The dowry system is a centuries-old custom that cuts across class and religious lines in India. For some modern, wealthy families, the dowry often is a token gift. For poor families, it can be a great burden — a fact sometimes cited as a reason families prefer sons.

While a son will grow up one day, marry and bring dowry gifts to the family, the birth of a daughter means a family can expect to have to pay up one day.

The women of Firozpur Namak, a village 70 kilometres west of New Delhi, live by such traditions. They seldom leave their homes except to visit relatives and close friends in the neighbourhood. They are discouraged, by men, from talking about issues considered part of the male domain, such as the rape of Baskar.

"The womenfolk talk just about cooking and babies," said Kifayat Khan, a local teacher.

"Rapes happen every day, that's not the issue," he said. "The village has been dishonoured because the girl had

been married in the traditional way and then this happened."

A few years ago in Firozpur Namak, a young bride was burned to death over her dowry.

The woman's family sought justice from the council of village elders — an ancient system that remains strong in rural India. The government legal system borrowed from British colonialism has less historical weight in tradition-bound villages.

In the case of the woman who was burned, the council ordered the victim's husband to return the dowry and pay her family the money spent on the wedding. Then life continued as usual for the killers.

In the past, victims' families have been reluctant to come forward for fear of having their shame publicised. Baskar is among a growing number of women insisting on justice, either from the traditional councils or in court.

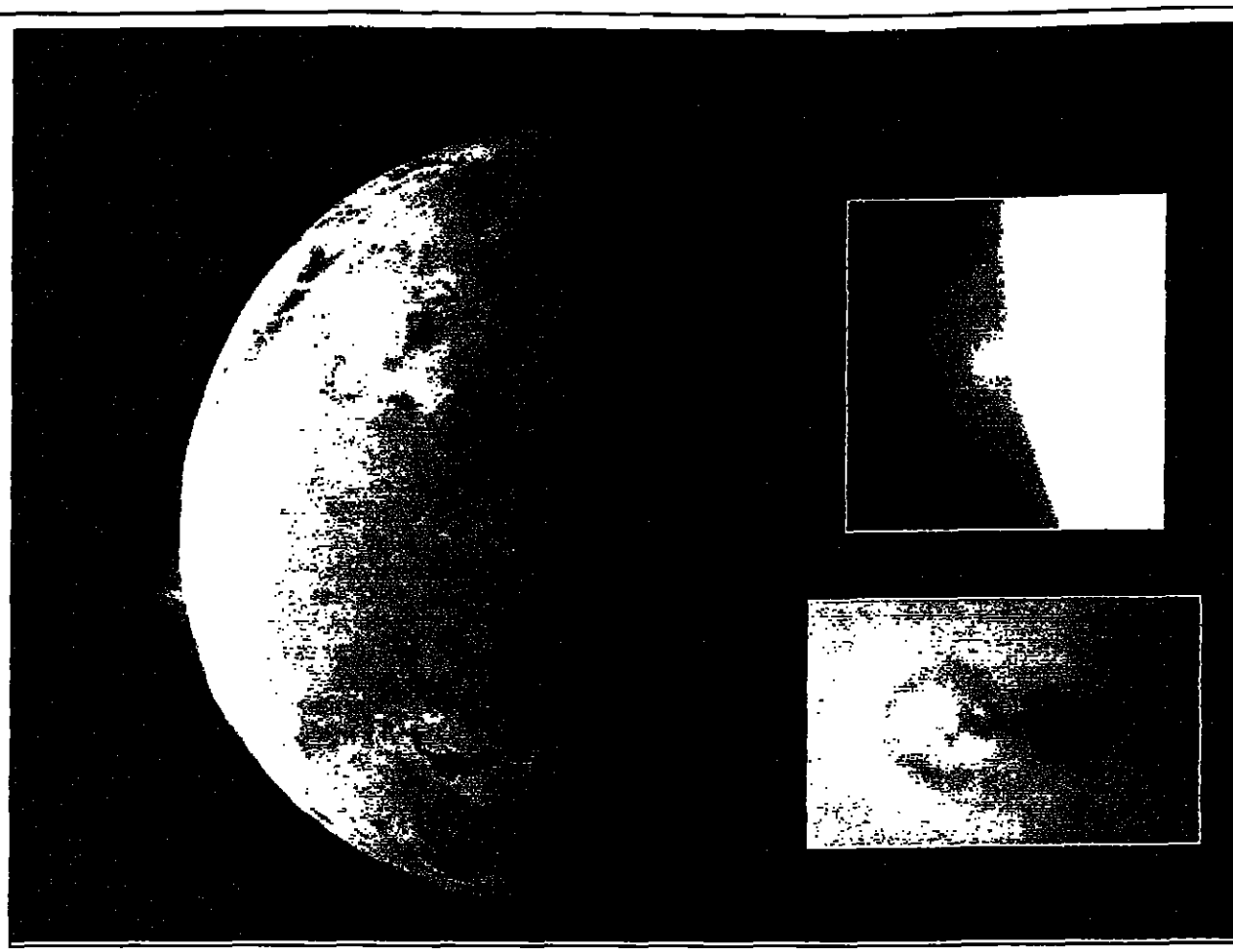
On Thursday, the old men debated the charges against Baskar's husband, who along with his friends reportedly went into hiding.

The assembly of elders overwhelmed this small town, forcing most of them to stand for several hours during their talks. But there were no signs of women in Firozpur Namak that afternoon: The influx of strangers kept them indoors.

Locals waited for the council's ruling. "If the council says tear apart the rapists, we will do so. But if they say accord them a hero's welcome, we will do even that," said Ibrahim Hassan, a construction labourer.

Finally, word came. The council was disbanding without reaching a verdict — meaning that for the foreseeable future, the accused will face no punishment.

"We are not surprised by the outcome," Ms. Bannerjee, the rights activist said.



This colour image, acquired during Galileo's ninth orbit around Jupiter and released July 28 by NASA, shows two volcanic plumes on Io. One plume was captured on the bright limb or edge of the moon (see inset at upper right), erupting over a caldera. The plume seen by Galileo is 140 kilometres high and was also detected by the Hubble Space Telescope. The second plume, seen near the terminator (boundary between day and night), is called Prometheus after the Greek fire god (see inset at lower right). The shadow of the 75-kilometre high airborne plume can be seen extending to the right of the eruption vent. The Prometheus plume can be seen in every Galileo image with the appropriate geometry, as well as every such Voyager image acquired in 1979. It is possible that this plume has been continuously active for more than 18 years (AFP photo)

Hamas denies link to Brooklyn suspects

OCCUPIED JERUSALEM (AFP) — The Islamist group Hamas denied Saturday any connection to two Palestinians arraigned in the U.S. for planning bombings in New York.

"We deny any link to the prisoners or the accusations against them," Hamas said in a statement received by Agence France Presse.

"We remind the world of our public position which refuses any attacks outside Palestine. Our jihad (holy war) aims only at the Zionist occupation and we will never turn our weapons towards wide battles," it said.

"Hamas condemns the United States' bias towards the Zionist enemy... but we say once more that we do not make enemies of the American people nor target any of them," the group said.

Local television in New York Friday said that two of three Palestinians arrested the day before in a raid on their flat belonged to Hamas.

Ghazi Ibrahim Abu Mezer, 23, and Lafi Khalil, 22, were arraigned Friday on Federal conspiracy charges after police found five home-made bombs in their Brooklyn apartment.

U.S. authorities have refused to comment on any link to Hamas.

Suspects in U.S. bombing plot charged while still in hospital

NEW YORK (AFP) — The two main suspects in the plot to bomb the New York subway system were arraigned on Federal conspiracy charges here as authorities continued to study their links to Mideast terrorists.

A judge presented Ghazi Ibrahim Abu Mezer, 23, and Lafi Khalil, 22, with the charges as they lay in bed in hospital recovering from bullet wounds received when police raided their Brooklyn apartment early Thursday.

Police found five home-made bombs on the premises during the raid, and opened fire when one of the suspects appeared to be trying to detonate one of the bombs.

Two of the three men arrested at the apartment were linked to Hamas, though police have refused to comment on the links.

Police searching the Brooklyn apartment found a Jordanian passport in the name of Mr. Mezer, Canadian and U.S. immigration documents and an application for U.S. asylum in which Abu Mezer stated he had been arrested in Israel and accused of links to a terrorist group.

Kallstrom and Giuliani expressed astonishment that Abu Mezer ever got into the U.S.

"It is appropriate to question just why it is that this person was allowed to come in the country announcing that he has been accused of being part of a terrorist group in Israel," Mr. Giuliani said.

"Obviously, (the) investigation is going to extend beyond New York," Mr. Kallstrom said without giving further details.

Letters written in Arabic that police found in the apartment talked about killing many people in the U.S., as well as hitting U.S. and Jewish targets worldwide.

Also in the apartment was a picture of Sheikh Omar Abdul Rahman, the spiritual leader of the men who carried out the World Trade Centre bombing. Abdul Rahman is currently in prison, convicted on charges of conspiring to blow up several New York landmarks, including the U.N. building.

"We were close to a disaster that did not happen," FBI Deputy Director James Kallstrom said at a joint press conference with New York Mayor Rudolph Giuliani.

Police were tipped off about the planned bomb attack by a man who temporarily lived with the suspects, identified in Egyptian media accounts as Abdul Rahman Mossabab.

Mr. Mossabab, 31, who came to New York in mid-July after winning an immigration lottery, briefly lived with the bomb suspects and learned of their plot as he sought a neighbourhood where Islamic people lived.

The suspects lived a spartan life. Their apartment had little furniture other than two mattresses on a bare floor, a bookshelf with a handful of books, and

almost empty kitchen cabinets.

Mossabab told police that Gazi was increasingly angry over daily news reports of violence between Palestinians and Israelis, and over some time began collecting material to build a bomb.

Yet it was a New York police ticket for jumping a subway turnstile that apparently pushed him into taking action, Mr. Mossabab said.

Abu Mezer's brother told AFP that the suspected terrorist was from the West Bank city of Hebron and had been living in the U.S. for four years.

"He is a normal person. he is not involved in political activity and is not linked to Islamic fundamentalist groups," the brother said.

"He called me last week to tell me how happy he was over there, where he lives with his American girlfriend."

Devices discovered with the suspects lacked timers, indicating suicide attacks were being planned.

Mr. Mossabab tipped off police about the plot because his religious beliefs clashed with the idea of killing innocent people, he reportedly told police.

"I think he's very courageous, he's going against the norm in that you're supposed to go along with what your people say," a police source told the New York Daily News. "His faith told him one thing, and his loyalty... would dictate that he sit idly by and let this happen."

30,000 cows rounded up in New Delhi cattle crackdown

NEW DELHI (AFP) —

Around 30,000 cows have been rounded up in the Indian capital over the past 18 months as part of a crackdown on stray cattle, newspapers reported Saturday. The Asian Age said the cows were now being taken care of in special areas here. The reports follow an order from the New Delhi High Court in April that the municipal authorities should clear the streets of "wandering animals." Cows, which are considered holy in Hindu-dominated India, can be seen wandering the streets of most cities in large numbers. They are totally immune to traffic dangers and, though rarely hit, often cause accidents.

Want to smoke in Singapore? Better stay home

SINGAPORE (AFP) —

Most indoor spaces in Singapore apart from private homes and hotel rooms will become no-smoking zones from the middle of August, according to tough new guidelines published Saturday. The Environment Ministry tightened what were already among the world's toughest anti-smoking laws by banning people from lighting up in all enclosed areas in schools and universities, air-conditioned private clubs, and air-conditioned shops. The law takes effect August 15. Violators will be fined up to 1,000 Singapore dollars (\$700).

Five people arrested in Britain for selling porn videos

LONDON (AFP) —

British police said Saturday they have arrested five people in connection with an international pornographic video ring. The five were arrested in Birmingham, Edinburgh, London, Manchester and Slough Wednesday to Friday, they said. In Birmingham, the police seized around 1,000 cassettes and video equipment. The five have been freed on bail while inquiries continue, police said. Police said the suspected ringleader was a Briton recently arrested in Spain and wanted by authorities in the U.S., where he is accused of selling child-sex videos.

Spanish royals switch wedding logo

BARCELONA (AFP) —

The logo created for the wedding of Spain's Infanta Cristina and handball star Inaki Urdangarin in Barcelona on October 4 will be changed because the royal family does not like it. The current logo, designed by Enric Statue, is made up of a handball surrounded by four roses and is vaguely reminiscent of the Olympic logo. In the revised design, Barcelona's coat of arms will replace the handball. "MI997" will appear over the drawing and "congratulations" will be written in three languages — Spanish, Catalan and Basque — underneath the design.

Opera singer Gundula Janowitz celebrates 60th birthday

BERLIN (AFP) —

The famed opera soprano Gundula Janowitz, known for her interpretations of Mozart's masterpieces in the 1960s, 1970s and 1980s, celebrated her 60th birthday Saturday. Born in Berlin, August 2, 1937, Janowitz spent her youth in Graz, Austria where she studied at the conservatory and was discovered by legendary conductor Herbert Von Karajan.



EX-CAPTIVE CAPTIVATES LEBANESE THIS TIME: A young Lebanese girl dances on songs of Greek singer Demis Rousos (right) during his concert in the ancient southern Lebanese port of Tyre late Friday. The celebrity was held hostage in Lebanon by Hizbollah as one of the 1985 U.S. TWA airliner captives (AFP photo)

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